HISTORY

In 1987, the Minnesota Legislature passed legislation creating the Telecommunications Access for Communication Impaired Persons (TACIP) Board for the purpose of making the telephone network in Minnesota accessible to communication-impaired persons (speech-, hearing-, and mobility-impaired). Two programs were established to accomplish this goal: the Minnesota Relay, which began service on March 1, 1989; and the Equipment Distribution Program (now re-named the Telephone Equipment Distribution [TED] Program), which began as a pilot program on October 1, 1988.

There have been significant changes and improvements to the Minnesota Relay since its early years of operation. In 1995, the Minnesota Legislature eliminated the TACIP Board and transferred the responsibility for the Minnesota Relay to the Minnesota Department of Public Service (now the Minnesota Department of Commerce[1]). Responsibility for the TED Program was given to the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS). The 1995 legislation also gave the responsibility for gathering consumer input regarding the Minnesota Relay and TED Program to the Department of Human Services, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division (DHHSD).

In 1996, after careful consideration of the needs of relay users, the Department of Public Service -TACIP administration (DPS-TACIP) recognized that it was in the best interest of relay users, telephone ratepayers, and the Legislature to relieve the state of the burden of owning TRS equipment. It was apparent that the Minnesota Relay facility and its equipment had become severely outdated and beyond the point of overhaul. DPS-TACIP was faced with two options; spend millions of dollars for the purchase of new equipment, or contract with a qualified TRS vendor to provide continually upgraded equipment and software on a "lease" basis. It was decided that the best way to provide quality and cost effective relay services was to contract with a highly qualified TRS vendor.

On February 29, 1996, the Minnesota Department of Administration, on behalf of DPS-TACIP, issued two requests for proposals (RFPs). One of the RFPs solicited competitive proposals for the operation and maintenance of the Minnesota Relay by a local consumer organization serving communication-impaired persons. The second RFP solicited competitive proposals for the provision of Minnesota Relay facilities, state-of-the-art TRS equipment and technical support staff.

Communication Services for the Deaf (CSD) and Sprint Communications Company LP (Sprint) were the vendors selected by DPS for the provision of TRS in Minnesota.

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[1] Effective September 15, 1999, the Governor, by executive order, merged the Departments of Public Service (DPS) and Commerce (DOC).

Another major decision facing DPS-TACIP after the contracts were awarded was where to locate the new relay center. DPS-TACIP concluded that it was most favorable to relocate the relay center from downtown St. Paul, to Moorhead, MN. The relocation was done for two primary reasons: economics and confidentiality. CSD was able to lease space in Moorhead at half of the downtown St. Paul rate. Confidentiality is essential and relay users are much more comfortable having their private conversations relayed by communication assistants who live and work hundreds of miles away.

On June 30, 1996, relay traffic originating in Minnesota was forwarded to relay centers operated jointly by CSD/Sprint. The new Minnesota Relay center located in Moorhead opened on December 16, 1996, and began relaying 95 percent of calls originating in Minnesota.

In April of 2000, DOC-TACIP, CSD and Sprint learned of City of Moorhead plans to demolish the Minnesota Relay center and other adjacent buildings located on a 23-acre tract, to make way for a proposed $50 million economic revitalization project.

Despite a long list of challenges, DOC-TACIP, Office of the Attorney General, Minnesota Department of Administration, CSD, Sprint, City of Moorhead, and the project's developers worked diligently to arrive at solution to relocate the relay center within the new development's proposed office complex. The project's developers agreed to demolish the relay center last and build the proposed office complex first, thus enabling the Minnesota Relay to make a seamless transition from their old location to the new office complex on February 20, 2002.

Obtaining brand new office space designed specifically for the Minnesota Relay also allowed for a center expansion from 70 workstations to 114 workstations, thus creating more jobs and allowing the new center to process thousands more calls from all over the United States. Also, due to the expanded number of workstations and the professionalism and competence of our CAs, the Minnesota Relay was given the responsibility of serving as the back-up center for the Federal Relay Service. Minnesota Relay's services were first engaged by the Federal Relay on July 16, 2002.

On April 8, 2002, the Governor of the state of Minnesota signed into law HF 3125. Effective August 1, 2002, the new legislation changed the name of the TACIP program to Telecommunications Access Minnesota (TAM). DOC sought the name change at the request of relay users objecting to the inclusion of the word "impaired" in the TACIP acronym.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACCESS MINNESOTA

TAM Administration

The Minnesota Relay and Telephone Equipment Distribution (TED) Program are administered by the Telecommunications Access Minnesota (TAM) program within the Department of Commerce. The relay center is provided to the state under contracts with Communications Services for the Deaf and Sprint Communications Company LP. The TED program is provided to the state under an interagency agreement with the Department of Human Services. The TAM administrator manages all vendor contracts and interagency agreements to ensure the provision of the Minnesota Relay and TED Program.

TAM Funding

The Minnesota Relay and TED Program, as well as the administrative expenses of TAM, are funded by a 10-cent fee charged monthly to each telephone access line in the state, including wireless phones.

Minnesota Stat. §237.49 states that "Each local telephone company shall collect from each subscriber an amount per telephone access line representing the total of the surcharges required under sections 237.52, 237.70, and 403.11. Amounts collected must be remitted to the department of administration in the manner prescribed in section 403.11. The department of administration shall divide the amounts received proportional to the individual surcharges and deposit them in the appropriate accounts. A company or the billing agent for a company shall list the surcharges as one amount on a billing statement sent to a subscriber".

TAM surcharges collected from telephone access lines are deposited into a dedicated account. Minnesota Stat. §237.52, Subd. 1, states "A telecommunications access Minnesota fund is established as an account in the state treasury. Earnings, such as interest, dividends, and any other earnings arising from fund assets, must be credited to the fund".

Minnesota Stat. §237.52, Subd. 2, states "The commissioner of commerce shall annually recommend to the commission an adequate and appropriate surcharge and budget to implement sections 237.50 to 237.56. The Public Utilities Commission shall review the budget for reasonableness and may modify the budget to the extent it is unreasonable. The commission shall annually determine the funding mechanism to be used within 60 days of receipt of the recommendation of the department and shall order the imposition of surcharges effective on the earliest practicable date. The commission shall establish a monthly charge no greater than 20 cents for each customer access line, including trunk equivalents as designated by the commission pursuant to section 403.11, subdivision 1".

Minnesota's Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS) program observes all jurisdictional separation of costs as required by the Federal Communications Commission's 47 C.F.R § 64.604 (c) (5), Section 410 of the Communications Act of 1934, Minnesota Stat. § 237.10, and Minnesota Rules, Chapter 7810.6400. All Minnesota Relay intrastate and interstate minutes are reported separately and distinctly to the state on the Sprint invoice.

The local and intrastate minutes, including 49% of toll free and 900 minutes, are reimbursed through a fund established by the Minnesota Legislature. In accordance with Minnesota Stat. § 237.52, Subd. 3, "Every telephone company or communications carrier that provides service capable of originating a telecommunications relay call, including cellular communications and other nonwire access services, in this state shall collect the charges established by the commission under subdivision 2 and transfer amounts collected to the commissioner of administration . . ." The interstate and international minutes, including 51% of toll free and 900 minutes[2], are reimbursed by the Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS) Interstate Fund administered by the National Exchange Carrier Association (NECA).

Costs for interstate and intrastate Video Relay Service and Internet Relay access and usage are recovered from the TRS Interstate Fund administered by NECA.

Population Served

TAM serves Minnesotans who are deaf, deaf-blind, hard-of-hearing, speech- or mobility-impaired and hearing users of the Minnesota Relay.

In 2001, the U.S. Bureau of the Census set the general population in Minnesota to be approximately 5 million. Using this figure, it is estimated that ***500,000*** Minnesotans have some hearing loss, ***67,600*** Minnesotans are deaf, and ***429,600*** individuals living in Minnesota are hard-of-hearing.

There are approximately 28 million deaf and hard-of-hearing people in the United States (about 1 in 10). Total or partial hearing loss is the most common disability in the country, and the numbers are likely to rise significantly as the 76 million baby boomers age. According to statistics, there are more baby boomers with hearing loss (10 million) than there are people over the age of 65 with hearing loss (9 million)[3]. Hearing loss among those now age 46 to 64 has increased 26 percent over previous generations according to the National Health Interview Survey conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics. The significant increase in "premature" hearing loss can be attributed to baby boomer's greater exposure to loud noises (such as rock concerts, traffic, power tools,

[2] The FCC revised the payment formulas for toll free and 900 minutes on May 1, 2002 (CC Docket 90-571).
[3] Statistics sited by Starkey Laboratories (largest manufacturer of hearing aids in the United States).

headsets, and the vast array of other electronics) than previous generations. Hearing loss is now considered a baby boomer phenomenon!

Specific statistics on speech- and mobility-impaired individuals are not as readily available. However, in 1997 the U.S. Bureau of the Census estimated that 2,270,000 Americans age 15 and above have difficulty with speech[4], and that there were approximately 101,439 Minnesotans with a mobility limitation in 1990.

Hearing loss, speech-impairments and mobility-limitations affects more than just the people who *are* impaired. Deaf, deaf-blind, hard-of-hearing, speech- and mobility-impaired individuals have hearing people in their lives with whom they need to communicate: family members, friends, co-workers, and even emergency service personnel. Relay users also communicate by phone with a number of types of businesses such as take-out restaurants, doctors' offices, government agencies, and banks. Businesses, too, need to be able to contact current and potential customers who are deaf, deaf-blind, hard-of-hearing, speech- or mobility-impaired.

The Minnesota Relay and TED Program benefit a much larger population than just those who are deaf, deaf-blind, hard-of-hearing, speech- or mobility-impaired; these programs help to insure that *all* Minnesotans are able to stay connected to people who are important to them.

TAM's Goal

The terms and conditions of the relay service provider contracts reflect TAM's goal to provide Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS) that exceed the quality of relay services available in other states. Given that Communication Services for the Deaf and Sprint are national leaders and have the largest nationwide market share in the provision of TRS, DOC-TAM believes that the Minnesota Relay is among the most technologically advanced and reliable relay centers in the nation.

Role of the Public Utilities Commission

In accordance with Minnesota Stat. §237.55, DOC-TAM must submit its annual report to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC). Each report must review the accessibility of the telephone system for users of the Minnesota Relay and the Telephone Equipment Distribution (TED) Program. In addition, the annual report includes a description of services provided by both the Minnesota Relay and TED Program, funds received and distributed annually for each component of the program, and plans for future operations.

[4] Disability status of the civilian non-institutionalized population.

DOC-TAM also submits its annual budget and surcharge recommendations to the PUC for approval. The commission reviews the TAM budget recommendations for reasonableness and may modify the budget to the extent it is determined unreasonable.

2002 MINNESOTA RELAY PROGRESS

New Features

In 2002, three new custom calling features were added to Minnesota Relay services: Enhanced Turbo Code, Internet Relay Service, and Video Relay Service.

Enhanced Turbo Code (E-Turbo™) allows TTY callers to automatically submit dialing and call set-up instructions when they dial into the Minnesota Relay. This significantly reduces the amount of time necessary for the communication assistant to set-up and transliterate the outbound call. The result is that the TTY caller is connected to their desired party at a speed that is functionally equivalent to that of a non-relay call. Not only is the TTY caller pleased with the speed in which their calls are processed, but due to the faster call set-up time, there are also fewer billable minutes to the state for session minutes.

Internet Relay allows anyone with an Internet Service Provider account to make Internet Relay calls 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Relay users are able to access Internet Relay from home, work, libraries, online cafes, Personal Communications Service handsets, and Personal Digital Assistant devices -- anywhere with a computer and Internet access. There is no charge to use Internet Relay and even long distance calls are free. Internet Relay allows the user to make calls in English, Spanish, or French Creole, and also to make two-line Voice Carry Over (VCO) calls.

Internet Relay users are also able to customize the look and feel of their call with the following options:

- Split Screen
- Language Preference
- Text Size
- Text Color
- Background Color
- Dialing Instructions
- Emotion Icons
- Print and Save Options

Video Relay Service (VRS) enables American Sign Language (ASL) users to "converse" with a hearing person by using an on-screen ASL interpreter as a communication assistant. This allows a relay call to be transmitted in real time because there is no waiting for text to be typed or read. The benefits of using VRS include:

- Enables ASL users to communicate in their first language.

- Significantly increases conversation speed to near real time.
- Enhances communication by allowing the use of facial expressions and body language cues.
- Removes communication barriers for relay users that are slow or non-typists (such as small children), or exclusive ASL users.
- Allows users to make interruptions.
- Ability to work efficiently with automated or menu telephone transfer systems.

Costs for the provision of interstate and intrastate Video Relay Service and Internet Relay are recovered from the TRS Interstate Fund administered by NECA.

Relay Center Relocation

The Minnesota Relay center is located in Moorhead, Minnesota and is provided under contract with DOC-TAM by Communication Service for the Deaf (CSD) and Sprint Communications Company. In April of 2000, DOC-TAM, CSD and Sprint were surprised to learn of City of Moorhead plans to demolish the relay center and other adjacent buildings located on a 23-acre tract, to make way for a proposed $50 million economic revitalization project.

However, City of Moorhead officials and project developers were unaware that their announcement threatened more than 250 full and part-time jobs, and could have forced DOC-TAM to contract for relay services provided by relay centers outside the state of Minnesota, and at a much higher cost to telephone ratepayers.

Despite the long list of challenges, all parties involved worked diligently and were able to devised a plan that would relocate the relay center within the new development's proposed office complex. In order to retain over 250 jobs, the project's developers agreed to demolish the relay center last and to build the office complex first, thus making way for a seamless transition from the old relay center to the new, *and at no cost to telephone ratepayers!*

On February 20, 2002, the Minnesota Relay moved to its new location at 800 Holiday Drive in Moorhead, MN. Obtaining brand new office space designed specifically for the Minnesota Relay allowed for a center expansion from 70 workstations to 114 workstations, thus creating more jobs and allowing the new center to process thousands more calls from all over the United States. Also, due to the expanded number of workstations and the professionalism and competence of our CAs, the Minnesota Relay was given the responsibility of serving as the back-up center for the Federal Relay Service. Minnesota Relay's services were first engaged by the Federal Relay on July 16, 2002.

On September 25, 2002, DOC-TAM, CSD, and Sprint hosted a grand opening celebration and open house for the new Minnesota Relay center. The day's events began with a ribbon cutting, which included the Moorhead Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors. Guests then enjoyed remarks from then DOC Commissioner, Jim Bernstein; CSD CEO, Ben Soukup; Sprint Government Systems Division vice-president, Tony D'Agata; Moorhead mayor, Mark Voxland; and Moorhead Holiday Associates LLP project developers, Ken Norman & Wayne Bradley. Lunch was provided by the vendors and guests were given a tour of the new center.

FCC TRS Recertification

In accordance with FCC 47 C.F.R § 64.605, and FCC Public Notice dated May 1, 2002, DOC-TAM submitted its application for renewal of the Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS) State Program Certification by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).[5]

As required by FCC 47 C.F.R. § 64.605 (b), DOC-TAM's certification application established that Minnesota's TRS program (1) "meets or exceeds all operational, technical, and functional minimum standards contained in § 64.604"; (2) "makes available adequate procedures and remedies for enforcing the requirements of the state program, including that it makes available to TRS users informational materials on state and Commission complaint procedures sufficient for users to know the proper procedures for filing complaints"; and (3) where the program "exceeds the mandatory minimum standards contained in § 64.604, the state establishes that its program in no way conflicts with federal law". Minnesota's TRS recertification application is available on the FCC's TRS Web page at: http://ftp.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/trs_minnesota.html.

Advertising Campaign

In 2001-2002, TAM conducted a $600,000 statewide Minnesota Relay/7-1-1 public awareness campaign. The main focus of the campaign was to inform the general public and raise awareness about the Minnesota Relay and the new 7-1-1 dialing shortcut. A secondary focus was to target senior populations and businesses.

Devaney & Associates, Inc., a marketing and advertising company located in the state of Maryland, was hired to prepare a media plan for the advertising campaign, which included the following:

- Design of a new Minnesota Relay logo.
- Six weeks of ads placed in *The Mesabi Daily News*.

[5] FCC 47 C.F.R. § 64.605 (c) state that "State certification shall remain in effect for five years. One year prior to expiration of certification, a state may apply for renewal of its certification by filing documentation as prescribed by paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section". Current state certifications expire July 26, 2003.

- Six weeks of ads placed in the following weekly newspapers: *Aitkin Independent Age; Alexandria Echo Press; Anoka County Union; Blaine-Spring Lake Park Life; Coon Rapids Herald; Sherburne County Citizens* (Becker); *Wright County Journal-Press* (Buffalo); *Detroit Lakes Tribune; Becker County Record; Hutchinson Leader; New Brighton Bulletin; Ramsey County Review* (North St. Paul); *Roseville Review; South-West Review* (South St. Paul); *Review East* (St. Paul); *Excelsior-Shorewood-Chanhassen Sun Sailor; Hopkins-East Minnetonka Sun Sailor; Richfield Sun Current; Robbinsdale-Crystal-New Hope-Golden Valley Sun Post; Thief River Falls Times;* and *The Ely Echo.*
- Six weeks of ads placed in *Minnesota Monthly* and *Good Age* (monthly magazines).
- Three different 30-second ads ran on television stations in: Minneapolis/St. Paul (KARE Ch 11, KSTP Ch 5 and WCCO Ch 4); Duluth/Superior (KBJR Ch 6); Rochester/Mason/Austin (KAAL Ch 6); Fargo/Valley City (KVLY Ch 11 and WDAY Ch 6); and Mankato (KEYC Ch 12).
- Three different 30-second ads that ran on cable stations in the following cities: Minneapolis/St. Paul; Duluth/Superior; Rochester; Austin; Albert Lea; Winona; Mankato; Fargo/Moorhead.
- Radio ads placed on WCCO.
- Radio ads placed on Gopher/Twins Network (Ada, Albert Lea, Austin, Bemidji, Brainerd, Crookston, Detroit Lakes, Duluth, Fergus Falls, Grand Rapids, Little Falls, Mankato, Morris, New Ulm, Owatonna, Rochester, St. Cloud, Mankato, Staples, Thief River Falls, Wadena, Willmar, Windom, and Winona).

National Wheelchair Softball Tournament Sponsor

In August 2002 the 26th Annual National Wheelchair Softball Tournament was held in Maplewood, MN. The three-day event attracted 15 teams from across the country, and Minnesota Relay was a sponsor of this event. By being a sponsor of the wheelchair softball tournament, Minnesota Relay was able to promote our Telephone Revoice Service (Speech-to-Speech) for people with speech disabilities.

In addition to a large banner displayed at the tournament and "Telephone Revoice Service" on the arena's marquee, sponsor posters and Speech-to-Speech brochures were mailed out to 150 organizations that have contact with individuals who are speech- or mobility-impaired. Posters were also placed at an additional 37 locations, including accessible residential complexes. A full-page ad was placed in *Access Press* (monthly newspaper published for persons with disabilities), and a Speech-to-Speech outreach coordinator was present during the tournament to hand out brochures and answer questions.

An Example of print ad/sponsor poster is attached in Appendix B.

MINNESOTA RELAY OPERATIONAL STANDARDS

Communication Assistant (CA)

CA Employment Standards

The Minnesota Relay has established successful procedures to attract qualified applicants for CA positions. The first step in the CA hiring practice requires that applicants take a validated test that evaluates typing, language, and other skills. When an applicant passes the test, a human resources representative screens the applicant for oral communication skills and work availability. If the applicant passes this step, he/she is interviewed in person by an operations supervisor for specific job dimensions that relate to the success of a CA. If the supervisor recommends the applicant for employment, the applicant's references are checked. This process helps ensure that only qualified applicants are hired to work at the relay center.

CA Training Program

Training is adapted to each participant's learning abilities and incorporates lectures, visual graphics, flow charts, videos, role playing, and hands-on call training to stimulate the CA's ability to learn.

New hires receive training in Deaf culture, American Sign Language (ASL) translation, oral Deaf, and sensitivity to the needs of persons with hearing and speech disabilities by a qualified person who, if not deaf or hard-of-hearing, possesses extensive knowledge in this area. During the initial training, CA's are trained and evaluated on how to accurately reflect the TTY user's intent and on the CA's role in the relay process. CAs' performance based skills such as grammar, spelling and oral communication abilities are evaluated on an ongoing basis.

Additionally, applicants are given four written and hands-on evaluations. These evaluations demonstrate spelling ability, typing accuracy, ability to process calls using training terminals and "role-playing" ability in varying levels of ASL. CAs also receive extensive training on how to improve their interpersonal skills so that they can work effectively when confronted with difficult and stressful situations that may arise while processing calls.

A copy of Sprint's TRS, Speech to Speech (STS) and Video Relay Service (VRS) Training Outlines are attached in Appendix C.

A team of ASL fluent Sprint employees developed ASL training workbooks that are utilized by CAs for ongoing training. These workbooks have been designed to provide supplemental training and to assist CAs toward the mastery of ASL translation on relay calls.

A copy of Sprint's Diversified Culture Training Module is attached in Appendix D.

Transmission of 60-WPM
All CAs must type a minimum of 60-WPM. Minnesota Relay utilizes an oral-to-type test that simulates actual working conditions. CAs are tested on an ongoing basis to ensure that a 60-word-per-minute performance requirement is maintained. During this test Minnesota Relay does not use technology-aided transmission to ensure the typing speed. The score earned by each CA is the actual words-per-minute typed.

Minnesota Relay also utilizes technological aides such as pre-programmed macros and auto-correcting software, along with the CA's natural skill, to provide optimal typing accuracy.

CA Quality Assurance Programs
(1) Individual Monthly Survey: Monthly surveys and formal reviews are used to monitor and evaluate the continuing training of CAs. The survey process is a product of a task force comprised of management staff who evaluate all areas of work performance, personal effectiveness and attendance. The survey process goals are to respond to customer feedback and provide CAs with clearly defined and objective performance measures. Two surveys are completed on each CA every month and include areas such as typing accuracy, spelling, conversational English/ASL translation, clarity/enunciation, caller control, and etiquette/composure.

(2) Quality Assurance Test Calls: To ensure that all CAs are focused on FCC requirements and state contractual commitments, supervisors from every Sprint relay center pair up to perform 10 scripted test calls each on alternate centers for a total of 700 annual test calls per center. After each call, the supervisors fax the survey form to the appropriate relay center for the CA to receive immediate feedback. This feedback and appropriate guiding performance measures for specific components are addressed with each CA.

(3) Account Management and Trainer Test Calls: The Sprint operations department and members of the Sprint account management team identify areas of concern based on customer feedback, state feedback, individual survey results and customer contacts. Approximately 300 test calls per month are conducted. Results are compiled and shared with operations' management. Based on results, trainers and management determine if refresher training is necessary and what method should be used.

Confidentiality and Conversation Content

1. *Confidentiality Policies and Procedures*
Understanding that measures to ensure confidentiality are crucial to the success of any Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS) operation, Minnesota Relay uses procedural and environmental measures to safeguard customer and call information. In accordance with FCC regulations, all information provided for call set-up, including customer

database and branding information, is confidential and cannot be used for any other purpose. The use of any information obtained during the processing of a call is strictly prohibited. After an inbound party disconnects, the CA loses the ability to view or access any information pertaining to that call. No written or taped information regarding the call is kept after the call is released from the CA position. After a call is terminated, billing information is transferred to billing files and is no longer accessible except for bill processing purposes.

No one is permitted to watch or listen to actual calls except CAs and supervisory staff for the purpose of relaying, assisting or monitoring a call, or for training purposes. CA work areas require security key card access and visitors are not allowed on the relay floor.

CAs perform their work in cubicles bordered by high sound-absorption acoustic tiles and CAs wear special noise reducing headsets. CA workstations are arranged to minimize the number of cubicles that are side by side.

All relay center personnel are required to sign and abide by a confidentiality agreement, which is a promise not to disclose the identity of any caller or any information learned during the course of relaying calls. Employees are expected to abide by the confidentiality agreement during and after their employment. Please refer to Appendix E for the Minnesota Relay Confidentiality Agreement.

The Minnesota Relay strictly enforces confidentiality policies, including the following:

(a) Communication Assistant (CA)

- Prospective CAs are screened in the interview process on issues regarding ethics and confidentiality. During initial training, CAs are presented with examples of situations that could be considered breaches of confidentiality.
- Stress can be a factor in maintaining confidentiality. Therefore, CAs receive training on healthy detachment. When a CA requires counseling due to a stressful call, they do not discuss any specifics about the call. The Minnesota Relay contracts with professional agencies to provide employees with the confidential assistance of professionally certified counselors.
- All claims of breach of confidentiality are fully investigated. If the investigation confirms that any employee committed a breach of confidentiality, the employee will be terminated.

(b) Building

- Relay center entrances and CA work areas are accessed with security keys.
- Visitors are not allowed in the CA work area.
- CA terminal screens are not visible from any window area.

Speech-to-Speech (STS) Limited Exception of Retention of Information
At the request of a caller, STS CAs will retain information from a call in order to facilitate the completion of consecutive calls. No information is kept after the inbound call is released from the CA position.

2. *Verbatim Relay and the Translation of ASL*
CAs relay everything that is said and everything that is heard and do not omit or censor any aspect of the relay call. CAs must convey the entire conversation, including profanity. Also, all conversation during initial call set-up and acceptance of charges from the called party is relayed. All comments directed to either party by the CA are relayed and typed in parentheses.

CAs type to the TTY user or verbalize to the non-TTY user exactly what is said, verbatim, when the call is first answered and at all times during the conversation, unless either user specifically requests summarization or ASL interpretation.

At the request of the relay user, CAs will translate written ASL into conversational English. All CAs are able to translate the typed languages of relay users whose primary language may be ASL, or whose written English language skills are limited, to conversational grammatically correct English. Training is provided on various levels of English/ASL translation during the initial training, and continually throughout a CA's employment. To successfully complete training, the CA must demonstrate competent skills to translate calls as requested.

Speech-to-Speech (STS) Facilitation of Communication
STS CAs receive training on how to facilitate STS communication without interfering with the independence of the user. STS CAs are evaluated monthly on their ability to facilitate calls without altering the content of conversations or compromising the user's control of the call. Relay users have full control of all of their calls.

Types of Calls

Minnesota Relay provides 24 hour, 7 day-a-week Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS) for standard (voice), Text Telephone (TTY), wireless, or personal computer (PC) users to place local, intrastate, interstate, and international calls. Minnesota Relay also processes calls to directory assistance, toll free and pay-per-call numbers. There are no restrictions on the duration or number of calls placed by a relay user.

The Minnesota Relay works in conjunction with the Local Exchange Carrier Enhanced Services to provide additional functionality for users of TRS. The relay processes collect and person-to-person calls and calls charged to a third-party, as well as calls billed to prepaid and non-proprietary calling cards offered by local or interexchange carriers. Minnesota Relay also processes calls to, or from, restricted lines (e.g. hotel rooms and pay telephones).

When a call is placed through Minnesota Relay, a user is billed in the same manner that non-relay users are. Relay users are only billed for conversation time (which does not include call setup time, time elapsed between calls and wrap up time) on toll calls. Billing occurs within 60 days of the call date. Minnesota Relay users have the option of billing their calls to a non-proprietary LEC (local) or IXC (long distance) calling card, and will process calling cards offered by the user's carrier of choice if the carrier is a participant of the Carrier of Choice (COC) program, and as long as Feature Group D is at the carrier's access tandem.[6] Sprint works with the LECs and IXCs to compile and make available to all relay users a list of acceptable calling cards. The user's carrier of choice is responsible for providing call types and available billing options, and also handles the rating and invoicing of toll calls placed through the relay.

Minnesota Relay Features

- **7-1-1 Dialing Shortcut** – allows relay users to simply dial 7-1-1, nationwide, and be connected to the relay center in the state they are located.

- **Access to 900 Service** – allows Minnesota Relay users to access 900 number pay-per-call services.

- **Access to Restricted 800/877/888 Numbers** – TTY users are able to reach, through the Minnesota Relay, regionally restricted 800, 877, and 888 numbers and business offices of local telephone companies that have special prefixes, all of which would normally be accessible to the TTY user in their calling area.

- **Answering Machine Retrieval** – TTY users can request a Communication Assistant to retrieve messages from the TTY user's voice answering machine or voice mail.

- **ASCII Split Screen** – allows high-speed ASCII computer users and CAs to type and communicate more clearly and quickly. Similar to voice-to-voice conversation, ASCII Split Screen provides interrupt capability, when appropriate, for the ASCII user and the voice party.

- **Automated Number Identification (ANI)** – With ANI, the originating number appears automatically on the CA's monitor.

- **Branding of Call Type** – The Minnesota Relay has the ability to automatically record and store user's preferred custom calling information (e.g., Baudot, ASCII, voice, TTY, VCO, or HCO), which is determined by the most recent call placed by the relay user. The relay user's next call is then answered and set-up using automatically programmed information.

[6] Only IXCs that have entered into a collection and billing agreement with Sprint can provide their customer's access to long distance calling through the relay and are included in Feature Group D.

- **Call Blocking** – If desired, relay users are able to include in their customer database telephone numbers they want blocked. Call blocking prevents unwanted calls from being placed.

- **Caller ID** – Calls placed through the Minnesota Relay will provide the originating calling party number (ANI), or caller ID information, through the local exchange carrier for all local and most long distance calls.

- **Carrier of Choice** (COC) – allows relay users to choose their preferred carrier for intrastate, interstate, and international calls. This requires the user's COC to enter into a billing and collection agreement with Sprint.

- **Cellular/PCS Phone Access** – allows TRS cellular customers to reach the Minnesota Relay's toll-free number(s) to complete relay calls.

- **Customer Database** (CDB) – offers relay users numerous ways to automatically expedite the initiation of custom calls. These pre-selected customer calling features include, but are not limited to: communication modes (TTY, Voice, ASCII), carrier of choice, preferred billing method, frequently dialed numbers, emergency numbers, call block, etc.

- **Directory Assistance** (DA) – A CA will relay Directory Assistance calls between TTY users and the Local Exchange Carrier (LEC) DA operator. Once the caller makes the DA request, the CA will contact a LEC DA operator. After obtaining the number, the caller may choose to place the call through the relay or dial it directly, i.e., TTY to TTY. (Note: DA is often subject to charges by the caller's local telephone service provider.)

- **Deaf-Blind Transmission Speed** – A modification of the default transmission speed for Telebraille users. Instead of the default setting at 45 words per minute, the transmission speed has been reduced to 15 wpm, with system capability to increase or decrease transmission speed by 5-wpm increments.

- **Emergency Assistance** – Although relay users are discouraged from placing 911 calls through the relay, calls *are* placed at the caller's request. Through Sprint's E911 database, CAs use a "hot button" to automatically place a call to the caller's nearest Public Safety Answering Point.

- **Enhanced Turbo Code (E-Turbo™)** - allows TTY callers to automatically submit dialing and call set-up instructions when they dial into Minnesota Relay. This significantly reduces the amount of time necessary for the CA to set-up and process the outbound call. The result is that the TTY caller is connected to their desired party at a speed that is functionally equivalent to that of a non-relay call. Not only are TTY

callers pleased with the speed in which calls are processed, but due to the reduced call set-up time, there are also fewer billable minutes charged to the state for session minutes.

- **Error Correction** – This feature automatically corrects many typographical errors and spells out non-TTY abbreviations that may be used by the CA in voice-to-text transliteration.

- **Flexible Billing** – allows Minnesota Relay users to complete calls from anywhere in the world with a valid Minnesota third-party billing capability.

- **Gender ID** – This feature automatically matches relay user's gender with the gender of a CA. For example, the user has the option of allowing the Minnesota Relay to use the caller's Customer Database information to automatically match the CA's gender to their own.

- **Hearing Carry Over (HCO)** – A speech-impaired person with hearing capability may request Hearing Carry Over, which will enable the speech-impaired person to directly hear what the other party is saying and type back messages that will be spoken by the CA. HCO to HCO allows relay users access to HCO users at both ends of a relay call.

- **Hearing Carry Over to TTY** – allows HCO relay users to listen while the CA is reading/voicing TTY users' typed message. The HCO user types his/her conversation directly to the TTY user.

- **Intelligent Call Router** – Technology that automatically and seamlessly routes relay calls to the first available English or Spanish speaking CA in the network.

- **International Calls** – allows the relay user to place and receive calls to and from anywhere in the world (using English or Spanish languages only).

- **Internet Relay**- allows anyone with an Internet Service Provider account to make Internet Relay calls 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Relay users are able to access Internet Relay from home, work, libraries, online cafes, Personal Communications Service handsets, and Personal Digital Assistant devices – anywhere with a computer and Internet access. There is no charge to use Internet Relay and even long distance calls are free. Internet Relay allows the user to make calls in English, Spanish, or French Creole, and also make two-line Voice Carry Over (VCO) calls.

- **Last Number Redial** – allows Minnesota Relay users to call the last person dialed through the relay without having to provide the last telephone number dialed to the CA.

- **Recording Machine Capabilities** – allows CAs to record and play back audio-text interaction messages to reduce numerous callbacks to convey entire messages to calling parties.

- **Roaming Services** – allows Minnesota Relay user's calls to originate and terminate outside of Minnesota.

- **Spanish Relay** – Spanish Relay works the same way that English speaking relay does. The CA can relay calls between two Spanish speaking persons, ***or*** between a Spanish speaking person and an English speaking person as long as at least one caller uses a TTY.

- **Speech Disabled Indicator** – The command (S) typed by a speech-disabled person would inform the CA that a speech-disabled person is on-line.

- **Speech-to-Speech** – allows a speech-disabled person to voice their conversation with assistance or have their conversation voiced entirely for them. CA's revoice the words of the person with a speech disability or revoice the user's speech synthesizer output to the called party.

- **Speech-to-Speech Spanish** – Spanish speech disabled relay users who prefer to use their voice with varying levels of assistance may call the STS relay number and request a Spanish speaking CA to revoice their call.

- **Transfer Gate Capabilities** – The relay's ability to transfer relay callers to English TTY Operator Service and English or Spanish relay 24-hour customer service.

- **TTY Operator Services** – Sprint's TTY Operator Service is available to complete a TTY to TTY call, obtain directory assistance information, or receive credit for erroneous billing. The toll free number is 1-800-855-4000.

- **Turbo Code Capability** – allows users to send information at the same speed it is typed, resulting in a more natural conversational flow and the ability to interrupt one another.

- **Two-Line VCO** – allows VCO users to communicate using a VCO phone or personal computer with ASCII capability and a second line with conference calling capabilities.

- **Variable Time Stamp Macro** – This macro enables the relay caller to know when their called party has disconnected from the call.

- **Voice Carry Over (VCO)** – allows hard-of-hearing users to speak directly to a hearing person. To process this type of call, the CA types what the hearing user says and allows the hard-of-hearing user to speak directly to a hearing person.

- **VCO to HCO** – allows VCO users to communicate directly with HCO users. The hard-of-hearing or deaf caller speaks directly to the speech-impaired person, and the CA then types what the speech-impaired person says to the deaf or hard-of hearing person.

- **VCO to TTY** – allows VCO users to communicate with TTY users through the relay when both parties are using TTY devices. To process this type of call, the CA types the VCO user's spoken message to the TTY user and the TTY user types directly back to the VCO user.

- **VCO to VCO** – allows relay access to VCO users at both ends of the relay call.

- **VCO-With-Privacy-and-No-GA** – allows VCO users to use the standard VCO feature without needing to say "Go ahead", or "GA." Additionally, the CA does not listen to the VCO user's spoken words. Ordinarily, VCO users need to say "GA" so that the CA knows that it is the other party's turn to speak. With this feature the caller and the called parties do not say "GA." The responsibility for taking turns when speaking rests entirely upon the calling and called parties because the CA does not hear what the VCO user says.

- **Video Relay Service (VRS)** – Video relay enables the use of American Sign Language (ASL) in visual conversations over special phone terminals or computers with a video camera and high speed internet access. VRS allows callers to use ASL to converse with a video interpreter via a video link. The interpreter then translates ASL into spoken language or text for communications with standard voice or TTY users. VRS is yet another step in providing "functionally equivalent" access to telecommunication networks since VRS users are able to impart facial expressions and "tone", and are able to interject into a conversation as needed; capabilities that are difficult or impossible with TTY conversations. Also, VRS allows individuals who may not be able to use the traditional relay due to difficulties typing or spelling on a TTY, such as young children that can sign but not type, an opportunity to access the telecommunication network.

- **Voice Call Progression** – allows Voice or HCO callers to listen during call set-up (i.e., ringing or busy).

Future Minnesota Relay Features

Captioned Telephone (CapTel) – In 2003, pending contract approval, TAM will participate in a nine-month Captioned Telephone (CapTel) trial. The purpose for this trial is to evaluate the CapTel technology for potential use as an additional form for providing TRS in Minnesota.

CapTel functions much the same as a standard telephone to process a call. The user enters the phone number they want to call into the CapTel phone, which has a screen display similar to a TTY (but does not have a keyboard). The phone automatically dials the CapTel call center and transmits the called number. When the call is answered at the CapTel center, the outgoing dialing automatically takes place. When connected to the called party, the CapTel user speaks directly to the called party as with a standard phone. When the called party replies, the voice (which can be amplified) is transmitted directly to the user, while simultaneously the incoming speech is displayed on the phone's display panel. The text version of the conversation is provided via the CapTel operator using the latest in speech-to-text technology similar to what is used in many voice recognition captioning systems. The result is a seamless blending of voice and text with no interaction with an operator for either party.

All CapTel interstate and international minutes, as well as 51% of toll free and 900 minutes, will be reimbursed by the Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS) Interstate Fund administered by the National Exchange Carrier Association (NECA). Because CapTel is not presently mandated by the FCC and does not meet FCC minimum TRS requirements, NECA may, at any time, withdraw its reimbursement of CapTel minutes.

Handling of Emergency Calls

Sprint uses a system for incoming emergency calls that automatically and immediately transfers the relay user to the nearest Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP). Sprint considers an emergency call to be one in which a relay user indicates the need to connect to the police department, fire department, paramedics, or ambulance. The following steps will be taken to connect the caller to the correct PSAP:

- The CA, when told by a TTY/ASCII user (non-voice) that an emergency exists, will depress a "hot key".
- The CA's terminal instantly sends a query to the E911 database containing the caller's geographic area Automatic Number Identification (ANI).
- The database responds with the telephone number of the PSAP that covers the geographic source of the call, and then, automatically dials the PSAP number and passes the caller's ANI to the E911 service center.

The CA remains on the line until emergency personnel arrive on the scene unless previously released by the caller. The CA also verbally passes the caller's ANI onto the

E911 center operator. If the inbound relay caller disconnects prior to reaching E911, the CA will stay on the line to verbally provide the caller's ANI to the E911 center operator.

In-call replacement of CA's

The Minnesota Relay understands that a change of CAs can interrupt the natural call flow. Therefore, we strive to keep the same CA dedicated to each call. Minnesota Relay will ensure that the CA remains on the call for at least 10 minutes (or 15 minutes for a Speech-to-Speech call). If a change of CA is unavoidable, CAs are trained to make this transition as smoothly as possible and will inform both parties.

A CA change may occur for the following reasons:

- Customer requests change of CA
- User(s) verbally abuse the CA or use obscenity towards CA
- The call requires a specialist (Speech-to-Speech, another language)
- Illness
- Potential conflict of interest (i.e. the CA identifies an end user as a family member or friend)

In instances where it is necessary to change CAs, a second CA will plug in their headset at the position and watch the call for several minutes in order to assess the "spirit" of the call and make the transition smoother. After several minutes of observation, the second CA will wait until the voice person stops speaking and all conversation has been relayed and will then type to the TTY user: (CA # M _ _ _ _ CONTINUING UR CALL).

The CA will than say to the non-TTY user: "THIS IS CA # M _ _ _ _ CONTINUING YOUR CALL."

During initial training, trainees are required to practice this procedure. In addition, a training video was developed that clearly shows the procedure and how to ensure it is as smooth as possible.

CA Gender Preference

When a relay user requests a CA of the opposite gender of the CA who initially receives the call, the relay user is switched to an appropriate CA as soon as one becomes available. If a change of CA is necessary during the call, every attempt will be made to accommodate the previous gender request.

Speech-to-Speech Called Numbers

Minnesota Relay's Customer Database is available to Speech-to-Speech users. The database can be used to store a list of names, frequently dialed telephone numbers, and customer notes. The database automatically appears on the CA's terminal screen each

time a user dials into Minnesota Relay. The Customer Database helps to facilitate call set-up and conversing preferences for the STS user.

MINNESOTA RELAY TECHNICAL STANDARDS

Minnesota Relay Facilities

Minnesota Relay is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The relay service facility, provided by Sprint, uses the Rockwell Galaxy ISS 3000 switching system. The switch is an all-digital, state-of-the-art system that provides caller accessibility in excess of 99.99 percent. All major systems and components are redundant, which minimizes the dropping of calls originating or terminating in Minnesota.

The relay center utilizes both Uninteruptable Power Source (UPS) and backup power generators to ensure that the relay has uninterrupted power, even in the event of a power outage. UPS is used only long enough for the backup power generators to come on line – within a few minutes. The backup power generators are supplied with sufficient fuel to maintain operations for at least 24 hours. The generators can stay in service for longer periods of time as long as fuel is available. In the event of a power outage, the UPS and backup power generator ensure seamless power transition until normal power is restored. While this transition is in progress, power to all of the basic equipment and facilities essential to the relay center's operation is maintained. This includes:

- Switch system and peripherals
- Switch room environmentals
- CA positions (consoles/terminals and emergency lights)
- Emergency lights (self-contained batteries)
- System alarms
- Call Detail Record recording

As a safety precaution (in case of a fire during a power failure), the fire suppression system is not electrically powered. Once the back-up generator is on line, stable power is established and maintained to all TRS system equipment and facility environmental control until local utility power is restored.

For a complete explanation of Sprint's back-up plan, please refer to the Disaster Recovery Plan provided in Appendix F.

Transmission Circuits

Sprint is a certified interexchange carrier in all 50 states. Using Sprint's nationwide all digital fiber-optic network, transmission circuits meet, if not exceed, industry interexchange performance standards for circuit loss and noise.

Sprint's Synchronous Optical Network (SONET) provides the Minnesota Relay with the ability to operate on transmission circuits that form a "self-healing" ring. The SONET

ring is a portion of Sprint's fiber-optic network set-up in a ring, loop, or circle to provide survivability for that portion of the Sprint network. The Minnesota Relay is, therefore, linked to a coast-to-coast telecommunications route, which ensures voice, data, and video services without interrupting the call. This ensures that Minnesota Relay calls are safeguarded by automatically rerouting service around disruptions in approximately 60 milliseconds.

Accessing the Minnesota Relay

As of October 1, 2001, Minnesota Relay users are able to access the relay by simply dialing 7-1-1. On August 9, 2000, the FCC released the Second Report and Order concerning Nationwide 7-1-1 Access to TRS (CC Docket No. 92-105). The order required all common carriers, wireless providers, payphone vendors, and Private Business Exchange (PBX) vendors to provide 7-1-1 dialing access to relay services on or before October 1, 2001.

7-1-1 became available just over a year ago and, already, 50% of Minnesota relay calls are being placed using this dialing shortcut. Relay users are still able to access the Minnesota Relay by dialing the original 10 digit toll-free number.

ASCII & Baudot

Each CA position is capable of receiving and transmitting in voice and Baudot (including TurboCode™ and E-TurboCode™), as well as ASCII codes. When a call is received at the CA position, TTY signals are automatically identified as either Baudot or ASCII; if ASCII, the baud rate is detected. Intelligent modems allow the CA to handle either voice or data lines from the same CA work station. This automatic identification of call types for incoming calls provides a quick and efficient technique for varied customer input and reduces the average CA per-call work time to a minimum.

ASCII rates up to and including 19,200 bps are supported by the Sprint platform. The domestic TTY baud rate of 45.5 and the international rate of 50 baud are also supported.

Speed of Answer

As a TRS vendor since January 1992, Sprint has developed the capability to effectively manage a human resource pool that provides unsurpassed quality. Sprint has grown their TRS operations capability to handle approximately 27 million calls per year, thus providing Sprint with valuable experience in sizing its TRS operations to accommodate Minnesota Relay contract requirements. Historical call detail is gathered by 15-minute periods throughout the year and is combined with state-specific information to establish anticipated call patterns that accurately predict the personnel needs necessary to efficiently process relay calls.

Sprint meets the requirement of answering 85% of all calls within 10 seconds on a daily basis by a live CA (abandoned calls are included in this 85/10 Service Level calculation). Sprint will ensure that no more than 30 seconds elapses between the receipt of the dialing information and the dialing of the requested number. In 2002, Minnesota Relay's average speed of answer was 1.4 seconds, and our average service level was 97% (see appendix G for charts demonstrating monthly average speed of answer and service levels).

Sprint samples the average answer time a minimum of every 30 minutes for each 24-hour period. Sprint's Traffic Management Control Center (TMCC) and Enhanced Services Operations Control Center (ESOCC) are staffed with professionals who understand call processes, call volumes, distribution patterns, contract requirements and call routing, thus ensuring reliable service.

Sprint provides the Minnesota Relay with sufficient facilities to provide a Grade of Service (GOS) of P.01 or better for calls entering the Minnesota call center switch equipment. Inbound calls that may be blocked within the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) will receive a voice recording stating that all circuits are busy and to try the call again in a few minutes.

Performance of inbound traffic on each toll-free number where it enters the Sprint network is measured continuously and reported both daily and monthly. These measurements, which include traffic volume and blockage data, are compiled into a monthly report and provided to the Minnesota Relay state administrator. In addition, the dedicated trunk facilities that route the call from the terminating network switch to the Automatic Call Distributor (ACD) at the relay center are monitored daily for compliance with blockage limitations. This data is monitored for both short and long-term trends to ensure the most cost-effective use of resources.

Voice Mail and Interactive Menu (Hot Key)

When a Minnesota Relay caller reaches an answering machine, voice mail or interactive menu, the CA informs the relay caller by depressing a macro key which reads (ANS MACH) or (RECORDING) to keep the caller informed of the call progress. The CA then, if necessary, presses a "hot key" to record the voice announcement and relay the message back to the caller. The CA utilizes recording technology to obtain all information necessary on the first attempt. Then, the CA relays all of the recorded information to the customer and deletes the recorded message.

This technology greatly reduces the CA work time, as the CA does not need to make multiple out-dials. In addition, relay callers are only charged for the first call. Subsequent redials to leave a message or enter information into an interactive menu are not charged to the customer (Sprint has developed a procedure using their Ultra WATS lines to ensure that with additional out-dials the customer does not incur toll charges).

900 Service Calls

Callers to Minnesota Relay may access 900 services by dialing a free 900 number to access the relay. Use of a toll-free 900 number inbound to the relay center provides functionally equivalent access to the telecommunications network while preventing unauthorized end users from circumnavigating the LEC restrictions. This process ensures that the LEC will only complete those calls into the relay service that do not have a 900 number block added to their phone lines. The 900-service provider and the 900 number carrier will rate and bill the user as if the call was dialed directly from the originating user's telephone.

Equal Access to Interexchange Carriers

Minnesota Relay users are able to have their intrastate, interstate and international calls carried by any interexchange carrier who has agreed to participate in the Minnesota TRS Carrier of Choice (COC) program. When a caller indicates their COC preference, the CA will verify that the requested carrier is a COC participant; if they are, the call will be routed accordingly. Callers will be able to use any billing method made available by the requested carrier including collect, third party, prepaid and calling cards.

The current participating members of Minnesota Relay's Carrier of Choice program are:

- AT&T
- Broadwing Communications
- Broadwing Telecommunications
- Excel
- Global Crossings LTD
- LDDS
- MCIWorldCom
- McLeod USA
- Metromedia
- OPEX Long Distance
- SimCom
- Sprint
- Touch America (formerly Qwest)
- US Link
- Verizon Long Distance
- WilTel
- Working Assets
- WorldCom
- 10-10-220 (Telecom USA/ MCI)
- 10-10-222 (MCI WorldCom)
- 10-10-275 (WorldxChange)
- 10-10-288 (AT&T)
- 10-10-297 (Excel)
- 10-10-321 (Telecom USA/ MCI)
- 10-10-333 (Sprint)
- 10-10-502 (WorldxChange)
- 10-10-629 (WorldxChange)
- 10-10-636 (Clear Choice Five Talk)
- 10-10-781 (WorldxChange)
- 10-10-811 (VarTec FiveLine)
- 10-10-834 (WorldxChange)

If a Minnesota Relay caller does not indicate a COC preference to the CA, either on-line or in their customer database, or if their preferred carrier is not a COC participant, the call will be carried over the Sprint network. As with long distance calls carried by Sprint, most COC participants limit billing methods based on the type of line from which the call originates.

When a requested carrier is not a COC participant, Sprint has established a procedure where the carrier will be notified, verbally and in writing, of its obligation to provide access to TRS users and encourage their participation in the COC program.

Technology

Voice Carry Over (VCO)
VCO allows a user to speak directly to the person he/she is calling and receive responses by text through the CA (and vice-versa). In addition, Minnesota Relay offers VCO-VCO, VCO-HCO, VCO-TTY, and Two-line VCO calls.

Hearing Carry Over (HCO)
HCO allows a person to listen directly to the person they are calling and provide their responses by text through the CA (and vice-versa). This advancement eliminates the HCO users' need for reading macros and allows him/her to hear the call set-up, ringing and the called party answering the telephone. In addition, Minnesota Relay offers HCO-HCO, HCO-VCO, HCO-TTY, and Two-line HCO calls.

Internet Relay
Anyone with Internet access can make Internet Relay calls 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There is no charge to use Internet Relay; even long distance calls are free.

Internet Relay allows users to make calls in English, Spanish or French Creole and also make two-line VCO calls.

Internet Relay users have the ability to customize the look and feel of their Internet Relay calls with the following capabilities:

- Split-screen
- Language preference
- Text size
- Text color
- Background color
- Dialing instructions
- Emotion icons
- Print and save option

Internet Relay provides a secure and interactive relay experience using intuitive features designed for TRS users. The Internet Relay Web address is: www.sprintrelayonline.com

Video Relay Service (VRS)
VRS enables American Sign Language (ASL) users to "converse" with a hearing person by using an on-screen ASL interpreter as a communication assistant. This allows a relay call to be transmitted in real time because there is no waiting for text to be typed or read.

The benefits of using VRS include:

- Enables the ASL user to communicate in their first language.
- Significantly increases conversation speed to near real time.
- Enhances communication by allowing the use of facial expressions and body language cues.
- Removes communication barriers for relay users that are slow or non-typists, or exclusive ASL users.
- Ability to make interruptions.
- Ability to work efficiently with automated telephone transfer systems.
- Functional equivalency of making phone calls.

The Web address to place a VRS call or to find out more about VRS is: www.mnvrs.com

Future Technology Under Development

Future communication enhancements Sprint is currently investigating for its platform include:

- Caption Telephone (CapTel)
- Real-Time Captioning service for conference calling
- Speech-to-Text technology
- Wireless Internet Relay through cell phone devices
- Wireless Video Relay accessibility
- Palm Pilot and Two-Way Pager utilization through relay

MINNESOTA RELAY FUNCTIONAL STANDARDS

Consumer Complaints/Complaint Logs

Minnesota Relay users have the option of calling Minnesota Relay's Consumer Relations Office (800-657-3775), the Minnesota Relay state administrator (800-657-3599), Sprint's Minnesota account manager (585-243-4880), or Sprint's 24-hour Customer Service line (1-800-676-3777) to file complaints or commendations. Or, a user may request to speak to a relay supervisor during or immediately after a relay call. In addition, the CA has the capability to transfer the caller on-line to Sprint's Customer Service department.

Sprint provides copies of each TRS Customer Contact Form, which includes the date the complaint was filed, an explanation of the complaint, the date the complaint was resolved and explanation of the resolution and any other pertinent information to the Minnesota Relay state administrator. Further, Sprint and the Consumer Relations Office (CRO) maintain a log of each individual complaint and provide comprehensive reports on a monthly and annual basis to the Minnesota Relay state administrator.

If the complaint concerns a specific CA, an operations supervisor follows up and resolves the complaint. The role of the supervisor is to:

- Accept all types of complaints, issues and comments.
- Handle all service type complaints.
- Resolve complaints with communication assistants.
- Follow up with customers if requested by the customers.

If the complaint concerns a specific technical issue, a trouble ticket is filed and the ticket number is documented on the Customer Contact Form. The ticket will be investigated and resolved by an on-site technician. The Sprint account manager is responsible for tracking all technical complaints and following-up with customers on complaint resolutions.

If a miscellaneous complaint is filed with customer service, a copy is faxed to the Sprint account manager for resolution and follow-up with the customer. The account manager is also responsible for tracking all commendations and complaints filed with Sprint and sending copies of Customer Contact Forms to the CRO.

When a complaint or commendation is received by the CRO, a manager completes the Customer Contact Form, resolves the issue (unless it concerns a technical issue), and follows up with the customer. All complaints received by the CRO are recorded, tracked,

and added to the annual complaint log summary for submission to the FCC no later that June 30th of each year (FCC Docket 98-67).

Also, by June 25th of each calendar year, Sprint provides the Minnesota Relay state administrator with a copy of the 12-month complaint log report for the period of June 1-May 31, as well as a summary of the complaint log.

In the event that the Minnesota Department of Commerce-Telecommunications Access Minnesota (DOC-TAM) fails to take action within 180 days after a complaint is filed about the Minnesota Relay, the FCC shall exercise jurisdiction over the complaint. Failure to meet the deadlines for complaint resolution may adversely affect the continued certification of the Minnesota Relay [see C.F.R. § 64.605 (c) (6) (iii)].

Contact Persons

Trich Shipley, Senior Manager
Minnesota Relay Consumer Relations Office
332 Minnesota Street, Suite E1330
St. Paul, MN 55101
651-602-9005 (voice/TTY)
800-657-3775 (voice/TTY)
651-238-8225 (cell)
651-602-9010 (fax)
trichshipley@uswest.net

Jim Alan, Administrator
Telecommunications Access Minnesota
Minnesota Department of Commerce
85 Seventh Place East, Suite 600
St. Paul, MN 55101-3165
651-297-4565 / 800-657-3599 (voice)
651-297-3067 / 800-657-3603 (TTY)
651-284-4107 (fax)
jim.alan@state.mn.us

Mary Beth Mothersell, Minnesota Relay Sprint Account Manager
Sprint Relay
PO Box 547
Geneseo, New York 14454
585-243-4880 (voice)
800-927-0282 (TTY)
585-243-4884 (fax)
marybeth.mothersell@mail.sprint.com

Sprint's 24 Customer Service Hotline:
1-800-676-3777 (voice/TTY/ASCII)

Public Access to Information - Program Outreach

1. Telecommunications Access Minnesota (TAM)

TAM periodically contacts all Minnesota telephone companies to remind them of their responsibility, as required by FCC Rule CRF § 64.604 (c) (3), to include information about the Minnesota Relay and Telephone Equipment Distribution Program with each customer's bill or newsletter, and to have this information available in their telephone directories.

In addition to information provided in telephone directories and telephone bill inserts, TAM also provides outreach by placing advertisements in local magazines and newspapers, and by placing ads on radio and television stations. Examples of print ads are provided in Appendix H.

In 2001-2002, TAM conducted a $600,000 statewide Minnesota Relay/7-1-1 public awareness campaign. The main focus of the campaign was to inform the general public and raise awareness about the Minnesota Relay and the new 7-1-1 dialing shortcut. A secondary focus was to target senior populations and businesses.

Information on the Minnesota Relay is also available on the Minnesota Department of Commerce's Web site at: www.commerce.state.mn.us

2. Consumer Relations Office (CRO)

Minnesota Relay outreach presentations are provided through Minnesota Relay's Consumer Relations Office (CRO). The CRO's two main responsibilities are to educate the public about TRS and the Minnesota Relay, and to receive/resolve consumer complaints. The CRO currently consists of a senior manager who handles consumer questions/complaints, office administration, and oversees outreach programs; a manager who conducts relay outreach and education; two part-time Speech-to-Speech outreach coordinators; and two part-time Speech-to-Speech call demonstrators.

In 2002, the CRO staff conducted nearly 1000 presentations reaching more that 32,000 Minnesotans (see chart in Appendix I).

Relay outreach activities include the following:

- Contacting organizations to schedule presentations and/or to provide them with written information on relay services.
- Conducting presentations on a continual basis to American Sign Language I class students (i.e. at the University of Minnesota).

- Staffing a booth at conferences, seminars and the State Fair (the Minnesota Relay booth was visited by 16,000 people during the 2002 State Fair).
- Conducting one-on-one training sessions for individuals who are having trouble using specialized telephone equipment (i.e. TTY's, amplified telephones, Voice Carry Over telephones).

Outreach presentations may vary depending on audience needs. A typical presentation begins with background on the presenter, and then consists of an introduction to relay (including a video), followed by an overhead presentation and question/answer time. The presentation also includes distribution of relay brochures and related materials.

When presenting to a deaf or hard-of-hearing audience, more time is spent detailing the types of relay services that would be more applicable to their needs, such as Two-Line Voice Carry Over and Answering Machine Retrieval use.

When presenting to children, outreach staff makes learning fun by singing and signing the ABC's. A TTY is brought in for the children to type on and the process of calling a Deaf friend is discussed and demonstrated. ASL bookmarks are distributed and the children are encouraged to ask questions.

Speech-to-Speech (STS) outreach activities include the following:

- Contacting organizations (hospitals, nursing homes, and rehabilitation facilities) to schedule presentations and/or to provide printed materials on STS.
- Performing one-on-one training with first time STS users and personal care attendants.
- Staffing a STS booth at conferences and seminars.
- Conducting training and providing information to ensure that usage of STS relay is fully incorporated in the Individual Education Plans (IEPs) of all speech-disabled persons within Minnesota's public and private school systems.
- Conducting "drop-in" visits to speech-disability related organizations.

STS outreach can vary greatly depending on the audience. During a presentation to a medical organization, the outreach coordinator educates the audience on the types of individuals who would benefit from using STS relay (typically people with moderate to severe speech difficulties resulting from cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, Huntington's chorea, amyotropic lateral sclerosis, head injury, other degenerative diseases, laryngectomies, or the effects of stroke). The coordinator will play a STS videotape, distribute informational materials, and will place an actual STS call. Demonstrating STS relay by placing a call to a speech-disabled CRO staff member has proven to be a wonderful tool to convince the audience of the level of training, skill and patience the STS CA's have, and how easy a call can be.

Another form of outreach that the STS coordinator may utilize is a "drop in" visit. The coordinator stops by other organizations located in the same area that a scheduled presentation is being given and offers "on the spot" training to the speech pathologists or rehabilitation people within the organization. This type of outreach has been extremely successful and well received.

One-on-one training sessions are also provided by the STS outreach coordinators. This type of outreach typically consists of the coordinator going to a consumer's home to provide STS relay education and training. The coordinator may assist the consumer in placing a number of STS calls so the consumer feels comfortable with the call process and, more importantly, with the skill and professionalism of the relay's specially trained CAs. One-on-one outreach is also very effective, but is difficult to coordinate simply because many people hesitate to invite someone into their home.

Due to the dedication of the CRO staff and their diligence in providing STS outreach throughout the state, Minnesota Relay's STS call volume is the highest, per-capita, in the Nation with an average of 1,300 calls per month.

In 2002, the CRO launched a STS cable television campaign that included the broadcast of a STS informational video and two interviews. Combined, the informational video and interviews were aired a total of 82 times on the Northwest Cable Television Community Access channel, the Suburban Community channels, and cable stations in Blaine, Cottage Grove, and Stillwater. It is estimated that these broadcast reached over 100,000 homes in Minnesota.

Reports containing the CRO's outreach efforts are compiled monthly and forwarded to the Minnesota Relay state administrator. The CRO's monthly outreach summaries for 2002 are attached in Appendix J.

Outreach materials available from the Minnesota Relay Consumer Relations Office include:

- Minnesota Relay Brochure (English & Spanish)
- Voice Carry Over Brochure (English & Spanish)
- Speech-to-Speech Brochure (English & Spanish)
- Hearing Carry Over Brochure
- Minnesota Relay Bookmarks
- Minnesota Relay St. Paul/Minneapolis Area Code Wallet Map
- Speech-to-Speech Outreach Informational Folder

Consumers may contact the CRO to schedule a presentation, ask questions about relay services, or to request copies of brochures and other outreach materials. The CRO may be reached by contacting:

Trich Shipley, Senior Manager
Minnesota Relay Consumer Relations Office
332 Minnesota Street, Suite E1330
St. Paul, MN 55101
651-602-9005 (voice/TTY)
800-657-3775 (voice/TTY)
651-238-8225 (cell)
651-602-9010 (fax)
trichshipley@uswest.net

3. *Telephone Equipment Distribution (TED) Program*

Another great contributor to outreach efforts is the Telephone Equipment Distribution (TED) Program. The TED Program provides assistive telecommunication devices to eligible Minnesotans who have difficulty accessing the telecommunication network because they are deaf, deaf-blind, hard-of-hearing, speech-impaired or mobility-impaired.

TED Program staff conduct outreach presentations to inform the public about the availability of equipment through the TED Program, the eligibility requirements, and TED Program brochure/applications are distributed to participants. A description of the Minnesota Relay is always covered, as well as a brief explanation of the funding source for both the Minnesota Relay and TED Program. Additional information on the TED Program is provided later in this report. The TED Program may be reached by contacting:

Lauren Hruska, Coordinator
Telephone Equipment Distribution Program
Metro Square Building
130 7th Place East
St. Paul, 55101
651-297-3639 (voice)
651-296-2655 (TTY)
800-657-3663 (voice)
800-657-3513 (TTY)
651-297-7155 (fax)
lauren.hruska@state.mn.us

4. *Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division Advisory Committees*

The TED Program is administered through an interagency agreement between the Department of Commerce-Telecommunications Access Minnesota and Department of Human Services (DHS), Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division (DHHSD). DHHSD

provides access to an established network of regional service centers around the state and has professional staff experienced in working with communication-impaired persons. TED Program services are provided through seven DHHSD regional offices (located in Duluth, Rochester, Fergus Falls, St. Cloud, Bemidji, St. Peter and St. Paul); each of these offices has an advisory committee. In addition, there is an advisory committee for the one-person office DHHSD maintains in Virginia, Minnesota. The advisory committees each meet quarterly, and during these meetings consumer feedback is collected about both the Minnesota Relay and TED Program.

Information on the regional service centers can be found on the TED Web page at: www.dhs.state.mn.us/ecs/ted/regional_contact.htm. Or by contacting the TED Program at: 1-800-657-3663 (voice) 1-800-657-3513 (TTY).

Rates

Minnesota Relay users are charged no more for services than those charges paid by standard "voice" telephone users. Minnesota Relay users who select Sprint as their interstate carrier will be rated and invoiced by Sprint. Users who select a preferred interstate carrier via the Minnesota Relay COC list will be rated and invoiced by the selected interstate carrier. The caller will only be billed for conversation time.

By FCC jurisdiction, Sprint has two separate Message Telephone Service rates – one for interstate and one for intrastate. The table below exhibits the discounted rates off Sprint's MTS rates.

	Intrastate	Interstate
Day (7:00AM-6:59PM)	35%	50%
Evening (7:00PM-10:59PM)	25%	50%
Night/Weekend (11:00PM-6:59AM; all day Saturday & Sunday)	10%	50%

Jurisdictional Separation of Costs

1. General

Minnesota's TRS program observes all jurisdictional separation of costs as required by 47 C.F.R § 64.604 (c) (5), Section 410 of the Communications Act of 1934, Minnesota Stat.

§ 237.10, and Minnesota Rules, Chapter 7810.6400. All Minnesota Relay intrastate and interstate minutes are reported separately and distinctly to the state on the Sprint invoice.

2. *Cost Recovery*

The local and intrastate minutes, including 49% of toll free and 900 minutes, are reimbursed through a fund established by the Minnesota Legislature. In accordance with Minnesota Stat. § 237.52, Subd. 3, "Every telephone company or communications carrier that provides service capable of originating a telecommunications relay call, including cellular communications and other nonwire access services, in this state shall collect the charges established by the commission under subdivision 2 and transfer amounts collected to the commissioner of administration . . .". Minnesota's current TRS surcharge is $.10 per month, per access line.

The interstate and international minutes, including 51% of toll free and 900 minutes[7], are reimbursed by the Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS) Interstate Fund administered by the National Exchange Carrier Association (NECA).

Costs for the provision of interstate and intrastate Video Relay Service and Internet Relay access and usage are recovered from the TRS Interstate Fund administered by NECA.

Minnesota Stat. § 237.10, Minnesota Stat. § 237.52, and Minnesota Rules, Chapter 7810.6400 are attached in Appendix K.

Treatment of TRS Customer Information

The Minnesota Relay Customer Database includes items such as types of calls, billing information, speed dialing, slow typing, carrier of choice, emergency numbers, blocked outbound numbers, language type (English, Spanish, ASL) and call notes. At the end of the current contract(s) Sprint will transfer all Minnesota Relay Customer Database records, in a usable format, to the next incoming relay provider at least 60 days prior to the last day of service.

Call Volumes

In 2002, the Minnesota Relay handled an average of 117,372 calls per month and Speech-to-Speech handled an average of 1,313 calls per month. Minnesota Relay monthly call volumes for 2002, yearly call totals for 1998-2002, Speech-to-Speech monthly call volumes for 2001-2002, and 2002 calls by calling device are provided in Appendix L.

[7] The FCC revised the payment formulas for toll free and 900 minutes on May 1, 2002 (CC Docket 90-571).

TELEPHONE EQUIPMENT DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

The Telephone Equipment Distribution Program (TED Program) is responsible for distributing telecommunication devices to income eligible Minnesota citizens, informing communication-impaired persons of services available through the program, providing training in the use of the telecommunication devices and maintaining the assistive listening devices. Minnesota Statute 237.50 Subd. 3 defines "communication-impaired" to mean "certified as deaf, severely hearing impaired, hard-of-hearing, speech impaired, deaf and blind, or mobility impaired if the mobility impairment significantly impedes the ability to use standard customer premises equipment."

The TED Program is administered through an interagency agreement between the Department of Human Services (DHS), Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division (DHHSD) and DOC-TAM. DHHSD provides access to an established network of regional service centers around the state and has professional staff experienced in working with communication-impaired persons. Services are provided through the seven DHHSD regional offices located in Duluth, Rochester, Fergus Falls, St. Cloud, Bemidji, St. Peter and St. Paul. An organizational chart for DHHSD is included in this report as Appendix M. Each of the aforementioned offices has an advisory committee. In addition, there is an advisory committee for the one-person office DHHSD maintains in Virginia, Minnesota. The advisory committees each meet quarterly, and during these meetings consumer feedback is collected about both the TED Program and the Minnesota Relay.

Authority to Provide Equipment

Minnesota Stat. §237.51, Subd. 5 (3) provides the Department of Human Services with the authority to established specifications for special communication devices to be purchased under section 237.53, Subd. 3. This authorizes the Department to evaluate and purchase common devices that are beneficial to eligible persons under its distribution program.

The types of equipment distributed include, but are not limited to:

- Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf (TTYs/TDDs)
- Amplified Telephones (both hearing and voice)
- Ring Signaling Devices (auditory, visual and tactile)
- Voice Carry Over (VCO) phones
- Remote Control Speaker Phones

Program Outreach

DHHSD is responsible for the promotion of TED Program services and activities. In 2002, centralized outreach efforts included:

- Local exchange carriers were requested to include an insert containing TED Program information in mailings to their customers.
- TED Program information was sent to churches with an invitation to include this information in bulletins and newsletters.
- Advertisements were placed in various newspapers and print publications.
- Informational bookmark sized inserts were distributed to recipients of home delivered meals statewide.
- Informational placemats were distributed to senior dining sites statewide.
- Information about the TED Program was included on the application for the state's Telephone Assistance Plan.
- TED Program representatives answered questions and distributed program applications and brochures at the Minnesota State Fair.
- 175 presentations were conducted to groups of professionals and potential consumers.
- Information about the TED Program was included in all literature distributed by DHHSD.
- Brochures and applications were distributed to numerous service professionals and agencies.
- Information about the TED Program was included in an outreach campaign by the Department of Commerce to increase awareness about the Telephone Assistance and Lifeline programs. The campaign included brochures, posters, and bus stop posters.
- TED Program staff participated in a videotaped conference held for social service providers. Two hundred copies of this videotape will be distributed to various social service agencies.
- Flyers were mailed to inform the public about the TED Program Web site. The Web site currently averages approximately 300 hits per day.
- Postings and applications were distributed to public libraries.

An analysis of referral sources for 2002 shows that 30% of applicants learn about the TED Program from professionals who provide other client services such as social workers, nurses, and audiologists. A similar trend was noted in 2001. Therefore, targeting professionals was a significant focus of the outreach strategy for 2002.

The chart below lists the number of first time consumers served by the TED Program, as well as the number of new devices distributed to those individuals for calendar years 1998-2002. The TED Program provides repeat service to TED equipment recipients who need further assistance once the equipment is initially awarded. TED consumers contact the program often to receive additional training or to exchange their equipment because their needs have changed. The most common example is when a person's hearing

deteriorates and they are no longer able to access the telephone with the equipment they first received. In addition, the program provides repair and/or replacement of equipment that is no longer working properly. A portion of the over 36,000 devices the TED program has distributed since its inception are returned each year due to equipment malfunctions.

Year	# of initial individuals served	# of devices distributed
1998	2069	2120
1999	2141	2340
2000	2105	2695
2001	1882	2431
2002	1913	2584

Statistical Information

A report of TED Program activities is submitted quarterly to DOC-TAM by DHHSD. The report fully documents outreach activity, the number of households receiving equipment, the number of individuals served and the kinds of equipment distributed. The charts provided in Appendix N show 2002 TED Program activities and types of equipment distributed.

Consumer Profile

Whereas the TED Program serves a wide range of individuals with a variety of communication needs, the average consumer served in 2002 was a 73-year-old hard of hearing female. In 2002, two thirds of the people served by the TED Program lived outside of the seven-county metropolitan area.

Technological Innovations

The Minnesota Relay and TED program are currently working on a project to introduce Video Relay Services (VRS) to the public. The TED Program has installed a VRS station in their main office with the intent of ascertaining equipment requirements and installation issues. Similar VRS stations will be established in the seven regional service centers, as well as possibly setting up stations at four other public locations, including The School for the Deaf in Faribault, MN. A significant amount of groundwork was involved in establishing the first VRS station, primarily due to data privacy and security concerns. These issues appear to have been worked out, so progress should be made fairly rapidly with the subsequent stations. Once established, the VRS stations will be open for public use with the hope that relay users will try VRS and discover the freedom and comfort of making a relay call using ASL.

DHHSD has been involved in a series of meetings with the Department of Emergency Management and other stakeholders about how to alert deaf and hard of hearing people of natural and man made disasters. Traditional warning methods such as radio announcements or sirens are not effective for this population. One option identified by the group was the use of two-way pagers, which can be programmed to receive messages from internet-based warning systems. They can also be used to communicate in other situations similar to the way a hearing person would use a cellular phone.

During 2001, the TED Program conducted a pilot project to test the feasibility of adding two-way pagers to the program. The pilot program involved seventeen participants who were located in different regions of the state, represented different age groups, and had a variety of communication needs. Most of the participants gave the pagers favorable ratings. The main concern was that the service did not cover all regions of the state.

In upcoming months, a number of two-way pagers will be distributed to TED Program consumers in southeastern Minnesota. If the two-way pager program is successful and well received in the southeastern region, distribution of pagers will be expanded to the metro area.

FY 2002 & FY 2003 REVENUES & EXPENDITURES

FY 2002 Actual

Revenues:

Income from Surcharge	$6,139,259
Balance Forward	$5,364,099
Income from Interest	$210,447
Total Revenue	$11,713,805

Expenses:

TACIP Administration	$126,302
DHS/TED Contract	$1,568,352
Sprint-MN Relay Contract	$2,587,495
CSD-MN Relay Contract	$2,603,634
CSD-Consumer Relations Office	$864,992
Total Expenses	$7,750,775

Balance Forward: $3,963,030

FY 2003 Projected

Revenues:

Income from Surcharge	$5,200,000
Balance Forward	$3,963,030
Income from Interest	$108,416
Total Revenue	$9,271,446

Expenses:

TACIP Administration	$193,633
DHS/TED Contract	$1,500,000
Sprint-MN Relay Contract	$2,550,000
CSD-MN Relay Contract	$2,550,000
CSD-Consumer Relations Office	$350,000
Cap-Tel Trial	$300,570
Total Expenses	$7,444,203

Balance Forward: $1,827,243

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Minnesota Stat. §237.50-.57
and
Minnesota Rules, Chapter 8775

==237.50

237.50 Definitions.

Subdivision 1. Scope. The terms used in sections 237.50 to 237.56 have the meanings given them in this section.

Subd. 2. Repealed, 1995 c 190 s 17

Subd. 3. Communication impaired. "Communication impaired" means certified as deaf, severely hearing impaired, hard-of-hearing, speech impaired, deaf and blind, or mobility impaired if the mobility impairment significantly impedes the ability to use standard customer premises equipment.

Subd. 4. Communication device. "Communication device" means a device that when connected to a telephone enables a communication-impaired person to communicate with another person utilizing the telephone system. A "communication device" includes a ring signaler, an amplification device, a telephone device for the deaf, a Brailling device for use with a telephone, and any other device the department of human services deems necessary.

Subd. 4a. Deaf. "Deaf" means a hearing impairment of such severity that the individual must depend primarily upon visual communication such as writing, lip reading, manual communication, and gestures.

Subd. 5. Exchange. "Exchange" means a unit area established and described by the tariff of a telephone company for the administration of telephone service in a specified geographical area, usually embracing a city, town, or village and its environs, and served by one or more central offices, together with associated facilities used in providing service within that area.

Subd. 6. Fund. "Fund" means the telecommunication access for communication-impaired persons fund established in section 237.52.

Subd. 6a. Hard-of-hearing. "Hard-of-hearing" means a hearing impairment resulting in a functional loss, but not to the extent that the individual must depend primarily upon visual communication.

Subd. 7. Interexchange service. "Interexchange service" means telephone service between points in two or more exchanges.

Subd. 8. Inter-LATA interexchange service. "Inter-LATA interexchange service" means interexchange service originating and terminating in different LATAs.

Subd. 9. Local access and transport area. "Local access and transport area (LATA)" means a geographical area designated by the Modification of Final Judgment in U.S. v. Western Electric Co., Inc., 552 F. Supp. 131 (D.D.C. 1982), including modifications in effect on the effective date of sections 237.51 to 237.54.

Subd. 10. Local exchange service. "Local exchange service" means telephone service between points within an exchange.

Subd. 11. Telecommunication relay service. "Telecommunication relay service" means a central statewide service through which a communication-impaired person, using a communication device, may send and receive messages to and from a non-communication-impaired person whose telephone is not equipped with a communication device and through which a non-communication-impaired person may, by using voice communication, send and receive messages to and from a communication-impaired person.

HIST: 1987 c 308 s 1,8; 1988 c 621 s 2; 1993 c 272 s 2-6,17; 1995 c 190 s 1

==237.51

237.51 Telecommunications access Minnesota program administration.

Subdivision 1. Creation. The commissioner of commerce shall:

(1) administer through interagency agreement with the commissioner of human services a program to distribute communication devices to eligible communication-impaired persons; and

(2) contract with a qualified vendor that serves communication-impaired persons to create and maintain a telecommunication relay service.

For purposes of sections 237.51 to 237.56, the department of commerce and any organization with which it contracts pursuant to this section or section 237.54, subdivision 2, are not telephone companies or telecommunications carriers as defined in section 237.01.

Subd. 2. Repealed, 1995 c 190 s 17

Subd. 3. Repealed, 1995 c 190 s 17

Subd. 4. Repealed, 1995 c 190 s 17

Subd. 5. Commissioner of commerce duties. In addition to any duties specified elsewhere in sections 237.51 to 237.56, the commissioner of commerce shall:

(1) prepare the reports required by section 237.55;

(2) administer the fund created in section 237.52; and

(3) adopt rules under chapter 14 to implement the provisions of sections 237.50 to 237.56.

Subd. 5a. Department of human services duties. (a) In addition to any duties specified elsewhere in sections 237.51 to 237.56, the commissioner of human services shall:

(1) define economic hardship, special needs, and household criteria so as to determine the priority of eligible applicants for initial distribution of devices and to determine circumstances necessitating provision of more than one communication device per household;

(2) establish a method to verify eligibility requirements;

(3) establish specifications for communication devices to be purchased under section 237.53, subdivision 3; and

(4) inform the public and specifically the community of communication-impaired persons of the program.

(b) The commissioner may establish an advisory board to advise the department in carrying out the duties specified in this section and to advise the commissioner of commerce in carrying out duties under section 237.54. If so established, the advisory board must include, at a minimum, the following communication-impaired persons:

(1) at least one member who is deaf;

(2) at least one member who is speech impaired;

(3) at least one member who is mobility impaired; and

(4) at least one member who is hard-of-hearing.

The membership terms, compensation, and removal of members and the filling of membership vacancies are governed by section 15.059. Advisory board meetings shall be held at the discretion of the commissioner.

Subd. 6. Repealed, 1995 c 190 s 17

HIST: 1987 c 186 s 15; 1987 c 308 s 2,8; 1988 c 621 s 3; 1990 c 571 s 41; 1990 c 598 s 3; 1992 c 430 s 1,2; 1992 c 518 s 1; 1993 c 272 s 7-11,17; 1995 c 190 s 2-4; 1998 c 386 art 2 s 70; 1999 c 149 s 1; 1Sp2001 c 4 art 6 s 60-62; 2002 c 329 s 2

==237.52

237.52 Telecommunications access Minnesota fund.

Subdivision 1. Fund established. A telecommunications access Minnesota fund is established as an account in the state treasury. Earnings, such as interest,

dividends, and any other earnings arising from fund assets, must be credited to the fund.

Subd. 2. Assessment. The commissioner of commerce shall annually recommend to the commission an adequate and appropriate surcharge and budget to implement sections 237.50 to 237.56. The public utilities commission shall review the budget for reasonableness and may modify the budget to the extent it is unreasonable. The commission shall annually determine the funding mechanism to be used within 60 days of receipt of the recommendation of the department and shall order the imposition of surcharges effective on the earliest practicable date. The commission shall establish a monthly charge no greater than 20 cents for each customer access line, including trunk equivalents as designated by the commission pursuant to section 403.11, subdivision 1.

Subd. 3. Collection. Every telephone company or communications carrier that provides service capable of originating a telecommunications relay call, including cellular communications and other nonwire access services, in this state shall collect the charges established by the commission under subdivision 2 and transfer amounts collected to the commissioner of administration in the same manner as provided in section 403.11, subdivision 1, paragraph (d). The commissioner of administration must deposit the receipts in the fund established in subdivision 1.

Subd. 4. Appropriation. Money in the fund is appropriated to the commissioner of commerce to implement sections 237.51 to 237.56.

Subd. 5. Expenditures. (a) Money in the fund may only be used for:

(1) expenses of the department of commerce, including personnel cost, public relations, advisory board members' expenses, preparation of reports, and other reasonable expenses not to exceed ten percent of total program expenditures;

(2) reimbursing the commissioner of human services for purchases made or services provided pursuant to section 237.53;

(3) reimbursing telephone companies for purchases made or services provided under section 237.53, subdivision 5; and

(4) contracting for establishment and operation of the telecommunication relay service required by section 237.54.

(b) All costs directly associated with the establishment of the program, the purchase and distribution of communication devices, and the establishment and operation of the telecommunication relay service are either reimbursable or directly payable from the fund after authorization by the commissioner of commerce. The commissioner of commerce shall contract with the message relay service operator to indemnify the local exchange carriers of the relay service for any fines

imposed by the Federal Communications Commission related to the failure of the relay service to comply with federal service standards. Notwithstanding section 16A.41, the commissioner may advance money to the contractor of the telecommunication relay service if the contractor establishes to the commissioner's satisfaction that the advance payment is necessary for the operation of the service. The advance payment may be used only for working capital reserve for the operation of the service. The advance payment must be offset or repaid by the end of the contract fiscal year together with interest accrued from the date of payment.

HIST: 1987 c 308 s 3,8; 1988 c 621 s 4; 1992 c 518 s 2; 1993 c 272 s 12,13,17; 1995 c 190 s 5-7; 1995 c 201 s 1; 1Sp2001 c 4 art 6 s 63-65; 2002 c 329 s 3

==237.53

237.53 Communication device.

Subdivision 1. Application. A person applying for a communication device under this section must apply to the program administrator on a form prescribed by the department of human services.

Subd. 2. Eligibility. To be eligible to obtain a communication device under this section, a person must be:

(1) able to benefit from and use the equipment for its intended purpose;

(2) communication impaired;

(3) a resident of the state;

(4) a resident in a household that has a median income at or below the applicable median household income in the state, except a deaf and blind person applying for a telebraille unit may reside in a household that has a median income no more than 150 percent of the applicable median household income in the state; and

(5) a resident in a household that has telephone service or that has made application for service and has been assigned a telephone number; or a resident in a residential care facility, such as a nursing home or group home where telephone service is not included as part of overall service provision.

Subd. 3. Distribution. The commissioner of human services shall purchase and distribute a sufficient number of communication devices so that each eligible household receives an appropriate device. The commissioner of human services shall distribute the devices to eligible households in each service area free of charge as determined under section 237.51, subdivision 5a.

Subd. 4. Training; maintenance. The commissioner of human services shall maintain the communication devices until

the warranty period expires, and provide training, without charge, to first-time users of the devices.

Subd. 5. Wiring installation. If a communication-impaired person is not served by telephone service and is subject to economic hardship as determined by the department of human services, the telephone company providing local service shall at the direction of the administrator of the program install necessary outside wiring without charge to the household.

Subd. 6. Ownership. All communication devices purchased pursuant to subdivision 3 will become the property of the state of Minnesota.

Subd. 7. Standards. The communication devices distributed under this section must comply with the electronic industries association standards and approved by the Federal Communications Commission. The commissioner of human services must provide each eligible person a choice of several models of devices, the retail value of which may not exceed $600 for a communication device for the deaf, and a retail value of $7,000 for a telebraille device, or an amount authorized by the department of human services for a telephone device for the deaf with auxiliary equipment.

Subd. 8. Repealed, 1988 c 621 s 19

HIST: 1987 c 308 s 4,8; 1988 c 621 s 5-8; 1993 c 272 s 17; 1995 c 190 s 8-11; 1995 c 201 s 2

==237.54

237.54 Telecommunication relay service.

Subdivision 1. Repealed, 1995 c 190 s 17

Subd. 2. Operation. (a) The commissioner of commerce shall contract with a qualified vendor for the operation and maintenance of the telecommunication relay system.

(b) The telecommunication relay service provider shall operate the relay service within the state of Minnesota. The operator of the system shall keep all messages confidential, shall train personnel in the unique needs of communication-impaired people, and shall inform communication-impaired persons and the public of the availability and use of the system. Except in the case of a speech- or mobility-impaired person, the operator shall not relay a message unless it originates or terminates through a communication device for the deaf or a Brailling device for use with a telephone.

HIST: 1987 c 308 s 5,8; 1993 c 272 s 14,17; 1995 c 190 s 12; 1Sp2001 c 4 art 6 s 66; 2002 c 329 s 4

==237.55

237.55 Annual report on communication access.

The commissioner of commerce must prepare a report for presentation to the commission by January 31 of each year. Each report must review the accessibility of the telephone system to communication-impaired persons, review the ability of non-communication-impaired persons to communicate with communication-impaired persons via the telephone system, describe services provided, account for money received and disbursed annually for each aspect of the program to date, and include predicted future operation.

HIST: 1987 c 308 s 6,8; 1993 c 272 s 15,17; 1995 c 190 s 13; 1Sp2001 c 4 art 6 s 67

==237.56

237.56 Adequate service enforcement.

The services required to be provided under sections 237.50 to 237.55 may be enforced under section 237.081 upon a complaint of at least two communication-impaired persons within the service area of any one telephone company, provided that if only one person within the service area of a company is receiving service under sections 237.50 to 237.55, the commission may proceed upon a complaint from that person.

HIST: 1987 c 308 s 7,8; 1993 c 272 s 17

==237.57

237.57 Definitions.

Subdivision 1. Scope. The terms used in this chapter have the meanings given them in this section.

Subd. 2. Competitive service. "Competitive service" means a service that has been determined to be subject to effective competition or emerging competition.

Subd. 3. Effective competition. "Effective competition" exists when the criteria of section 237.59, subdivision 5, have been satisfied for a service.

Subd. 4. Emerging competition. A service will be regulated under "emerging competition" provisions when the criteria of section 237.59, subdivision 5, have not been satisfied, but there is a trend toward effective competition, or if it is a new service offered for the first time after August 1, 1994, that is not integrally related to the provision of adequate telephone service or access to the telephone network or to the privacy, health, or safety of the company's customers, whether or not it meets the criteria of section 237.59, subdivision 5.

Subd. 5. Local access and transport area. "Local access and transport area (LATA)" means a geographical area designated by the Modification of Final Judgment in U.S. v. Western Electric Co., Inc., 552 F. Supp. 131 (D.D.C. 1982).

Subd. 6. Noncompetitive service. "Noncompetitive service" means a service that has not been classified as competitive by the commission.

HIST: 1987 c 340 s 1,26; 1989 c 74 s 7,25; 1994 c 534 art 1 s 2

8775.0100 DEFINITIONS.

Subpart 1. **Scope.** The terms used in this chapter have the meanings given them in this part.

Subp. 2. **Applicable median income.** "Applicable median income" means the median gross income in Minnesota as estimated by the Bureau of the Census in the most recent annual announcement of the United States Department of Health and Human Services Family Support Administration, published in the Federal Register. These announcements are incorporated by reference.

Subp. 3. **Appropriate communication device.** "Appropriate communication device" means a communication device that most efficiently allows access to the telephone system by a communication-impaired person.

Subp. 4. **Blind.** A person is "blind" if central visual acuity does not exceed 20/200 in the better eye with corrective lenses or, if greater than 20/200, visual acuity is accompanied by a limitation in the fields of vision such that the widest diameter of the visual field subtends an angle no greater than 20 degrees.

Subp. 5. **Board.** "Board" means the Telecommunication Access for Communication-impaired Persons Board established in Minnesota Statutes, section 237.51.

Subp. 6. **Communication device.** "Communication device" means a device that when connected to a telephone enables a communication-impaired person to communicate with another person using the telephone system. A communication device includes a ring signaler, an amplification device, a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), a brailling device for use with the telephone system, and any other device the board considers necessary.

Subp. 7. **Communication-impaired person.** "Communication-impaired person" means a person determined by the

division to be deaf, deaf and blind, hard-of-hearing, mobility impaired, or speech impaired as defined by subparts 8, 9, 12, 16a, and 20.

Subp. 8. **Deaf.** "Deaf" means a hearing impairment of such severity that the individual must depend primarily upon visual communication such as writing, lip reading, manual communication, and gestures. A deaf person requires use of a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) to communicate effectively on the telephone.

Subp. 9. **Deaf and blind.** "Deaf and blind" means the conditions of a person who is (1) deaf or has a severe to profound hearing loss and (2) blind or visually impaired. A person affected by these conditions requires use of a brailling device for use with the telephone system or other specially designed system to communicate effectively on the telephone.

Subp. 10. **Division.** "Division" means the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division of the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

Subp. 11. **Economic hardship.** "Economic hardship" means an economic condition or level of subsistence on a household income that is at or below 60 percent of the applicable median income in the state.

Subp. 12. **Hard-of-hearing.** "Hard-of-hearing" means a hearing impairment resulting in a functional loss, but not to the extent that the individual must depend primarily upon visual communication. Some of the effects of the impairment can be overcome with proper amplification. A person that is hard-of-hearing may require a communication device to communicate effectively on the telephone.

Subp. 13. [Repealed, 19 SR 1666]

Subp. 14. **Household criteria.** For determining priority when initially distributing equipment or receiving more than one communication device, "household criteria" means the higher priority given for a household having more than one communication-impaired person or for a household with a communication-impaired person living alone.

Subp. 15. **Household income.** "Household income" means the total income of a communication-impaired person and immediate family living in the same residence. The immediate family includes spouse and minor children. The income of a minor child must be included when the dependent minor child is under 15

years of age and residing with the parents or custodial parent. If the communication-impaired person is a minor child, then parents and siblings residing with the minor are immediate family.

Subp. 16. **Income.** "Income" means money received in the preceding calendar year from each of the following sources:

A. money, wages, or salary;

B. net income from nonfarm employment as defined for federal tax purposes;

C. net income from farm self-employment as defined for federal taxes;

D. income from any social security program;

E. supplemental social security income;

F. public assistance or welfare payments;

G. interest on savings or other investments that pay interest;

H. dividend income from estates or trusts, or net rental income;

I. veterans' payments, unemployment compensation payments, and workers' compensation payments;

J. private or public employee pensions; and

K. alimony, child support, regular contributions from persons not living in the household, and other periodic income. This definition of income comes from that of the Bureau of the Census and is interpreted according to its standards as published in "Consumer Income," series P-60, No. 156, Money, Income of Households, Families and Persons in the United States: 1985. These standards are incorporated by reference, are not subject to frequent change, and are located in the government publications reference department of the University of Minnesota and in the Minitex interlibrary loan system.

Subp. 16a. **Mobility impaired.** "Mobility impaired" means a motor skill condition that significantly impedes a person's ability to use standard customer premises telephone equipment. A mobility-impaired person may require the use of a communication device with auxiliary equipment to communicate on the telephone.

Subp. 17. **Resident of Minnesota.** "Resident of Minnesota" means an individual who lives in Minnesota or who has moved to Minnesota and intends to remain in Minnesota.

Subp. 18. **Significant visual impairment.** "Significant visual impairment" means a visual disability that does not constitute legal blindness but which constitutes a substantial handicap to employment or limits the person's ability to live independently, perform self-care activities, or grow and develop.

Subp. 19. **Special needs.** "Special needs" means the needs of an eligible person that may require that the person be given priority when initially distributing the equipment or be given more than one communication device because of severity of communication impairment or presence of multiple disabilities.

Subp. 20. **Speech impaired.** "Speech impaired" means a condition that renders a person physically incapable of speaking clearly. The severity of the impairment may vary; however, it renders speech on an ordinary telephone unintelligible or impossible and requires a communication device to communicate effectively on the telephone.

Subp. 21. **TACIP.** "TACIP" means telecommunication access for communication-impaired persons.

STAT AUTH: MS s 237.51

HIST: 14 SR 848; 19 SR 1666

Current as of 05/01/00

8775.0200 PURPOSE AND CONSTRUCTION.

The purpose of this chapter is to develop and implement a statewide program to distribute telephone communication devices to eligible communication-impaired persons for improving access to telephone communications services for communication-impaired persons. This chapter is to be liberally construed to further these purposes.

STAT AUTH: MS s 237.51

HIST: 14 SR 848

Current as of 05/01/00

8775.0300 ELIGIBILITY FOR TACIP SERVICES.

Subpart 1. **Information provided.** On request, the division shall offer to a person an application form developed by the division and a brochure that describes the TACIP eligibility requirements and application process.

Subp. 2. **Application process.** The applicant shall complete the application form and return it to the division's regional service center for deaf and hard-of-hearing people. An application may be made by the applicant, the applicant's spouse, or a person authorized by the applicant to act in the applicant's behalf. All documentation must be provided within 30 days of the first interview with the division. The applicant shall provide medical documentation of communication impairment on request.

Subp. 3. **Documenting, verifying, and reviewing eligibility.** The division shall verify the applicant's household income, age, and access to telephone service, and that the applicant is a communication-impaired person. If the division becomes aware that a condition of eligibility has changed, the division may redetermine eligibility:

A. Within 30 days, an applicant shall document income or authorize the division to verify the income. The division shall help an applicant or recipient obtain documents that the applicant does not possess and cannot obtain. Information previously verified and retained by the division need not be verified again unless the information no longer applies to current circumstances.

B. The division shall not request information about an applicant for or recipient of TACIP services that is not of public record from a source other than within the division without the applicant's or recipient's previous written consent. The division may request information about an applicant or recipient that is not of public record from the telephone companies by obtaining the applicant's or recipient's previous written consent on an application or redetermination form. The division shall not provide third parties with access to information about an applicant's eligibility status or other case record information without the previous written consent of

that applicant or recipient, except when access to specific case information is granted to agencies designated by the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minnesota Statutes, chapter 13. Information designated as confidential by the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act may only be made available to agencies granted access under that law and must not be provided to an applicant, recipient, or third party.

C. The division shall inform the recipient of the recipient's responsibility to report permanent changes in circumstances that affect eligibility within ten days of each change.

Subp. 4. **Eligibility criteria.** To be eligible for the TACIP program, a person must:

A. be at least five years of age;

B. be a communication-impaired person;

C. be a resident of Minnesota;

D. be a resident in a household at or below the applicable median income in the state, except that a deaf and blind person applying for a brailling device for use with the telephone system may reside in a household that has a median income no more than 150 percent of the applicable median household income in the state; and

E. have or have applied for telephone service and been assigned a telephone number. A person who at the time of application does not have telephone service, but meets all other eligibility requirements, will be declared "conditionally eligible" and, in order to be declared "eligible," must apply for telephone service and be assigned a telephone number.

Subp. 5. **Persons not eligible.** Persons who are residents of a residential or treatment facility that directly or indirectly receives federal funding and is required to be fully accessible to all residents by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, United States Code, title 29, section 774, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, United States Code, title 42, section 12101, et seq., and are eligible for and can obtain communication devices through federal provisions are not eligible to receive TACIP services under this chapter.

Subp. 6. **Notification of eligibility.** Within 30 days of the receipt of the application and the necessary documentation

the division shall notify the applicant in writing whether the applicant is found eligible and, if the applicant is denied, the reasons for denial.

Subp. 7. **Determination of appropriate communication device.** The division shall determine the appropriate communication device for a recipient.

STAT AUTH: MS s 237.51

HIST: 14 SR 848; 19 SR 1666

Current as of 05/01/00

8775.0400 COMMUNICATION DEVICES; INITIAL DISTRIBUTION PRIORITY.

Subpart 1. **First priority: deaf and blind.** The first in priority are those eligible, deaf and blind persons having special needs, experiencing economic hardship, or meeting the household criteria standards.

Subp. 2. **Second priority: deaf.** The second in priority are those eligible, deaf persons having special needs, experiencing economic hardship, or meeting the household criteria standards.

Subp. 2a. **Third priority: speech and mobility impaired.** The third in priority are those eligible speech- and mobility-impaired persons having special needs, experiencing economic hardship, or meeting the household criteria standards.

Subp. 3. **Fourth priority: impaired speech.** The fourth in priority are those eligible, speech-impaired persons having special needs, experiencing economic hardship, or meeting the household criteria standards.

Subp. 3a. **Fifth priority: mobility impaired.** The fifth in priority are those eligible, mobility-impaired persons having special needs, experiencing economic hardship, or meeting the household criteria standards.

Subp. 4. **Sixth priority: hard-of-hearing.** The sixth in priority are those eligible, hard-of-hearing persons having special needs, experiencing economic hardship, or meeting the household criteria standards.

Subp. 5. **Seventh priority: others without special needs.** The seventh in priority are those eligible, communication-impaired persons having no special needs, not experiencing economic hardship, and not meeting the household criteria standards.

Subp. 6. **Use of priority system.** Initially, the priority system must be used to determine the priority of eligible applicants for receiving telecommunication devices, for example, to establish a waiting list of eligible applicants. Only if allotted program money is insufficient to provide all eligible applicants with needed equipment may the priority system be used to determine which individuals will receive equipment.

STAT AUTH: MS s 237.51

HIST: 14 SR 848; 19 SR 1666

Current as of 05/01/00

8775.0500 HOUSEHOLDS ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE SEVERAL DEVICES.

Subpart 1. **Deaf.** A communication-impaired person who is deaf is eligible for a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) and a ring signaler.

Subp. 2. **Deaf and blind.** A communication-impaired person who is deaf and blind is eligible to receive a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or brailling device for use with the telephone system with auxiliary equipment approved by the board and necessary for efficient communication.

Subp. 3. **Two or more eligible persons.** If a household contains more than one eligible communication-impaired person with various communication impairments, the board or its designee may approve more than one telephone device as necessary for efficient communication.

Subp. 4. **Hard-of-hearing.** A communication-impaired person who is hard-of-hearing is eligible for a ring signaler and amplification device if more than one device is necessary for efficient communication.

Subp. 5. **Mobility impaired.** A communication-impaired person who is mobility impaired is eligible for a speakerphone or similar device with auxiliary equipment that the board or its designee deems necessary.

Subp. 6. **Speech and mobility impaired.** A communication-impaired person who is speech and mobility impaired is eligible for a speakerphone or similar device, or telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) and any auxiliary equipment approved by the board.

STAT AUTH: MS s 237.51

HIST: 14 SR 848; 19 SR 1666

Current as of 05/01/00

8775.0600 TRAINING AND MAINTENANCE.

The commissioner of human services shall maintain the communication devices until the warranty period expires at which time the board shall decide whether to repair or replace defective units. The commissioner shall provide training, without charge, to first-time users of the devices.

STAT AUTH: MS s 237.51

HIST: 14 SR 848

Current as of 05/01/00

8775.0700 OWNERSHIP.

Communication devices distributed under this chapter are and must remain the property of the state of Minnesota.

STAT AUTH: MS s 237.51

HIST: 14 SR 848

Current as of 05/01/00

8775.0800 APPEALS.

Subpart 1. **Aggrieved party.** An aggrieved party may appeal a decision of the division. An aggrieved party is an applicant:

A. who is determined ineligible for TACIP service

under part 8775.0300, subpart 4;

B. who disagrees with the division's determination regarding the appropriate communication device under part 8775.0300, subpart 6;

C. who disagrees with the division's decision regarding priority for initial distribution of communication devices under part 8775.0400; or

D. whose TACIP service is terminated.

Subp. 2. **Procedure.** Requests for appeal must be made within 30 calendar days of receiving notice of adverse action or, for good cause shown, within 60 calendar days of receiving the notice. Requests for appeal can be made through written, telephone, or face-to-face contact with a designated representative of the regional service center for deaf and hard-of-hearing people.

Subp. 3. **Conciliation conference.** Within 30 calendar days of receiving a request for appeal, a representative of the regional service center for deaf and hard-of-hearing people shall meet with the aggrieved party and attempt to resolve informally the matter leading to the appeal. Within ten calendar days of the conciliation conference, the representative shall prepare a written summary of the issues addressed at the conciliation conference and shall send a copy of the written summary to the aggrieved party and to the board.

Subp. 4. **Formal hearings.** If still dissatisfied after receiving a copy of the conciliation conference summary, the aggrieved party may request a hearing before the board by making written, telephone, or face-to-face contact with a designated representative of the regional service center for deaf and hard-of-hearing people. A hearing before the board must be scheduled within 90 days. At the hearing, the aggrieved party may introduce evidence relevant to the issues on appeal. An aggrieved party may be represented by legal counsel or a lay advocate at the hearing.

Subp. 5. **Service pending appeal.** Termination of TACIP services must be stayed pending an appeal.

STAT AUTH: MS s 237.51

HIST: 14 SR 848; 19 SR 1666

Appendix B

Wheelchair Softball Tournament
Print Ad/Sponsor Poster

2002

26TH NATIONAL WHEELCHAIR SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT

August 14-15-16

St. Paul, Minnesota

JOIN US FOR A BALL OR MAYBE A STEEE-RIIIKE!

NO ADMISSION FEE

GAMES START FROM 9 AM - 7 PM

CHAMPIONSHIP GAME AUGUST 16 AT 11 AM

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Now even people with speech disabilities can use the telephone.

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TO SPEECH

Appendix C

Sprint's Telecommunications Relay Services, Speech-to-Speech and Video Relay Service Training Outlines

Sprint TRS Training Outline

Module	Module Description
Module 1	Orientation Objectives Welcome & History Future of Sprint What is Relay? CA Training Call Flow Chart
Module 2	Phone Image Objectives Introduction Communicating Information Using Conversational Tone Managing Dissatisfied Customers
Module 3A	Overview of System and Equipment Objectives Logging In Logging Out Screen Display Checking for Understanding Headsets Modem Error Correction Keyboard Last Typed Macro Feature English Macros Spanish Macros Telephony Terms
Module 3B	Interactive Terminals Knowing Your TTY Closing a Conversation Typing Background Noises
Module 3C	Overview of System and Equipment (FRS Only) Malfunctions Relay Procedures Confidentiality Statistics Handling Obscene Calls Requesting a Supervisor Reporting Macros
Module 4A	Call Processing Procedures Objectives Your Role as CA Call Processing for All States
Module 4B	Destinations of Traffic Destinations not Allowed IntraLata Competition State Differences

Module	Module Description
Module 4C	Answering Machines and Audiotext Record Feature Voice Answering Machine Voice to TTY Answering Machine Information Line Audiotext Voice Mail Pagers/Beepers (TTY-Voice) Pagers/Beepers (Voice - TTY) Variations Answering Machine Retrieval
Module 4D	Voice Originated Calls Local Call Description Toll Free and Paid Paid over Sprint Network Paid over Alternate Carrier Variations
Module 4E	Long Distance Calling FONcard LEC Card Optional Cards Pre-Paid Cards Collect Third Party Immediate Credit
Module 4F	VCO and HCO Voice Carry Over (VCO) Inbound VCO Branding Busy Line No Answer Two-Line VCO Hearing Carry Over (HCO) Non-Branded HCO Branded HCO

Module	Module Description
Module 4G	Alternate Call Types VCO to VCO VCO to TTY TTY to VCO HCO to HCO HCO to TTY TTY to HCO
Module 4H	Customer Database Customer Database Feature Customer Notes Window UCR Main Menu Name Submenu COC Submenu InterLata COC IntraLata COC Billing Method Window Billing Options Numbers Submenu Emergency Numbers Frequently Dialed Numbers (FD) Blocked Numbers Customer Notes
Module 4H	Customer Database Preferences Answer Type Language Type Outdial Restrictions Macros Last Number Redial

Module	Module Description
Module 4I	Variations Busy Signals Poor Connection No Answer Request for Information Speech Impaired Pacing Voice Customer Profanity towards CA Request for M or F CA CA Knows Customer Suicide Abuse Illegal Calls Sensitive Topics Redialing Switchboards Young Children Inbound ASCII Repeating Information Request for Relay Number Restricted Calls ASCII on Outbound Line Regional 800 Two Calling From Numbers LEC Service Office Double Letters Call Waiting Conference Calls Three-Way Calling Changing CAs 800 Number Referral Hard-of-Hearing Customer Call Backs for TTYs Multiple Calls
Module 4I	Variations Call Modification Holding Alternate Language Typing in Parenthesis Product Information Spanish Calls Voice Customer Hangs Up Variable Time Stamp TTY Customer Hangs Up Conversation being Recorded Prompting Voice for "GA" Non-Standard TTY Capability Internet Characters TTY does not type "GA" Cellular Long Distance Calls Party Line Calls

Module	Module Description
Module 5	Emergency Call Processing Emergency Calls Non-Emergency Calls Emergency Incident Form
Module 6A	Performance and Procedures Performance Measurement Plan Quality Customer Service Commitment Personal Effectiveness Assessment Survey and Replay Emergency Procedures Emergency Assistance Form Checking for Understanding
Module 6B	Healthy Relay Introduction Analogy Stretching Exercises CA Reinforcement Ergonomic Review Setting up Workstation GUAM - Get up and move
Module 6B	Healthy Relay Ergonomic Relief Slowing the Customer Overtime Relaxation
Module 7A	Responding Positively Stress Management Thoughts and Feelings Relaxing Emotionally Thinking Powerfully Exercise Nutrition Relaxation/Meditation Energy Resource Assessment Suggested Reading Leader's Notes
Module 7B	Healthy Detachment Interactive Communication TDD Communication Potential Stressors Detaching
Module 8	Assessing Performance Assessment Process Coaching Feedback Pass/Fail Guidelines Role Plays

Module	Module Description
Module 9	Supervisor as Trainer and Coach Introduction Objectives Being a Coach/Trainer An Adult Learner Giving Effective Instruction Feedback
Module 10	A Healthy Approach to Relay Learning Continuum Adult Education Dale's Cone of Experience Elements of Lesson Design Preparation for Training Warm Ups Voice Inflection Handling Interruptions Prep for Final Hearing Thru (TDD - Voice) Hearing Thru (Voice - TDD) Voice Thru (TDD - Voice) Voice Thru (Voice - TDD) Audiotext Information Lines Business Answering Machines Residential Answering Machines Beepers Spanish Answering Machine TTY Answering Machine

Sprint's Speech to Speech Training Outline

Module 1	**Orientation**	
	Objectives	What is Speech to Speech
	Welcome & Introductions	Differences from Relay
	Description	Agent Training
	History	
Module 2	**Speech to Speech Customers**	
	Objectives	Varying Speech Patterns
	Introduction	Voice Synthesizers
	Phone Image	Types of Calls
	Characteristics of Speech to Speech	Transparency &
	Customers	Confidentiality Phrases
	Breaking the Stereotypes	
Module 3	**Attributes of STS CAs**	
	Objectives	Caller Control
	Patience	Sensitivity and
	Concentration	Understanding
	Listening Skills	
Module 4A	**Call Processing Procedures**	
	Objectives	
	Your Role as CA	
	Billing	
	Directory Assistance	
	Changing CAs	
Module 4B	**Answering Machines and Audiotext**	
	Answering Machines	
	SA to SD Answering Machine	
	Busy/Disconnects	
	Audiotext Message	
	Pagers/Beepers	
Module 4C	**Emergency Call Processing**	
	Emergency Services	
	EM Numbers	
	Emergency Incident Form	
Module 4D	**Variations**	
	Outbound to Relay	Using GA
	Personal Conversations	Spelling
	Operator Calls	Announcement
	Talking on Hold	900 Calls
	Keeping the Customer Informed	Request to Hold
	Differentiating STS and Relay	SD to SD through STS
	Outdialing to STS	Non STS Calls

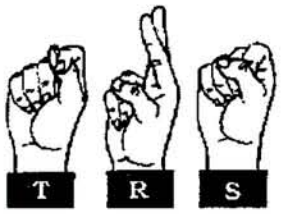
Sprint's Video Relay Service Training Outline and Qualifications

Qualifications	Certified by the NAD at levels III, IV, or V or certified by RID as IC/TC, CI, CSC, LSC or MSC of demonstrated State equivalent Possess a minimum of three years interpreting experience Possess English language skills at a college level Observe strict confidentiality guidelines using RID's Code of Ethics Function in a totally transparent mode Possess strong receptive and voicing skills Possess sensitivity to the needs of the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and hearing parties Have a wide range of experience working in the deaf Community utilizing ASL, PSE and Signed English Community utilizing ASL, PSE and Signed English communication modes in social, economic, and educational settings Possess interpreting experience for persons who have minimal language skills Possess computer literacy, including familiarity with current Windows operation system, and be able to operate computer and video equipment Exhibit superior customer service skills
Training Modules	History of Telecommunications relay services Orientation of VRS work station, video software and equipment Sign language interpreter code of ethics TRS operator rules of confidentiality and code of ethics VRS roles and responsibilities

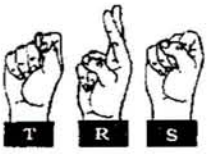
Appendix D

Sprint's Diversified Cultural Training Module

DEAF CULTURE



INTRODUCTION TO DIVERSIFIED CULTURE



INTRODUCTION TO DIVERSIFIED CULTURE

I. Who uses the relay service?

A. Hearing-impaired: a medical term encompassing all levels of hearing loss.

1. Deaf
2. Hard-of-hearing
3. Deafened

B. Deaf/Blind
C. Speech-Impaired
D. Hearing Population

II. Why is it important for us to understand our customers?

A. To dispel myths and misconceptions regarding deafness - see Attachment 1.1
B. Allows us to provide better quality service by meeting their needs.

III. Why is it important for us to recognize their special communication needs?

A. We can fulfill our role by providing equal telecommunication access.
B. We are committed to providing the best relay service possible. (ask for additional responses)

IV. Pathological vs. Cultural View of Deafness

(show comparison chart by Chris Wixtrom) - see attachment 1.2

V. Characteristics of Deafness (3 general background variables)

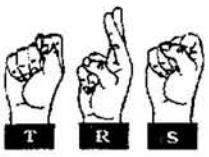
*Important to understand various speech and language skills.

A. Age of Onset

1. Parental impact/influences

a. Parents don't learn Sign language to communicate with their child.
b. Are there other siblings in the household?

2. Deaf parents and hearing parents react differently to the diagnosis of deafness in their children.



INTRODUCTION TO DIVERSIFIED CULTURE

a. Deaf parents are comfortable knowing their deaf child has barrier-free communication flow at home and can use the parents as role models in learning to cope with deafness.

b. Hearing parents may feel their child is different and go through a grief process when they first learn that their child is deaf. When they try to get information and guidance, they may be confused by all the different opinions they receive.

3. Deafness can occur before or after language and speech skills develop.

a. *Pre-lingual:* either born without hearing or lose hearing before age 5. Both speech and language are affected to varying degrees. When a hearing child starts first grade, they have a vocabulary of 3,000-15,000 words. If the deaf child does not have exposure to language they are at a disadvantage.

b. *Post-lingual:* those who became profoundly deaf, after age 5, but retained hearing long enough to establish fairly developed speech and language patterns.

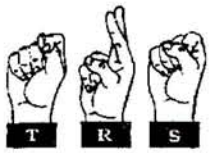
B. Degree of Deafness

1. Relative loudness levels of common sounds - see Attachment 1.3
2. Frequency in cycles per second - see Attachment 1.4
3. Range of hearing loss

Normal	0-15 dB
Slight	15-25 dB
Mild	25-40 dB
Moderate	40-65 dB
Severe	65-95 dB
Profound	95+ dB

C. Cause of Deafness

1. 50% includes:
   a. Illness during pregnancy - Rubella (German measles)
   b. Childhood illness - Meningitis or Chicken Pox
   c. Heredity



INTRODUCTION TO DIVERSIFIED CULTURE

2. Other 50% includes:

   a. Adventitious: caused by extrinsic factors like accidents, head trauma and unknown factors.

   b. Presbycusis: caused by natural aging process in humans. Vast majority of "hard-of-hearing" people fall into this category; senior citizens, etc.

      (1) Most deaf people have hearing children.
      (2) More than 90% of deaf children have hearing parents.

IV. The Deaf Community

A. A community is a social system in which people live together, share common goals, and carry out certain responsibilities to each other.

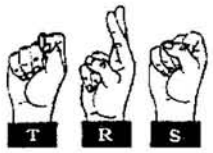
B. A Deaf Community is a group of people who:

   1. live in a particular region,
   2. share the common goals of its members, and
   3. work toward achieving their goals

C. Examples of Deaf communities

   1. State association of the deaf
   2. Local deaf club or chapter
   3. Deaf athletic association
   4. Schools for the Deaf and its alumni associations
   5. Church/religious services

D. The Deaf Community is made of deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals who respect a common language (ASL), politics, common experiences and values, and a common way of interacting with each other and with hearing people.



INTRODUCTION TO DIVERSIFIED CULTURE

*Think about the various cultures around the world. Each culture usually has its own language, norms of behavior, rituals, identity, values, beliefs and relationships that differ from the other cultures. Give some examples!

I. Why is there a Deaf culture?

A. The Use of ASL as a Common Language

1. Through speech and lipreading, deaf people only get fragmentary information; however, ASL allows them to have a completely understandable, two-way conversation.

2. Not all deaf people are fluent in ASL. They are divided into the following classes:

   a. *ASL monolinguals*--Deaf people who can communicate only in ASL and who have no exposure to English.

   b. *ASL dominant bilinguals*--Deaf people who are more comfortable communicating in ASL than in signed or written English.

   c. *Balanced bilinguals*--Deaf people who are comfortable communicating in either language and switch between languages with ease.

   d. *English dominant bilinguals*--Deaf people who are more comfortable communicating in signed or printed English than in ASL.

   e. *English monolinguals*--Deaf people who can communicate only in signed and/or printed English and have no knowledge of ASL.

   f. *Semi-linguals*--Deaf people who can communicate in both ASL and English, but have not mastered the languages.

B. Identity of Deaf People

1. How deaf people identify themselves is very important in Deaf culture.

   a. To deaf people, "hearing-impaired" is a term invented by hearing people. Deaf people who identify themselves as this are judged as not being able to accept their Deaf identity.

   b. Deaf people immersed in Deaf culture identify themselves as "Deaf," while they refer to those outside Deaf culture as "deaf."

INTRODUCTION TO DIVERSIFIED CULTURE

c. Deaf people rarely use decibels as a measure of hearing loss.

d. People with good residual hearing are labeled "hard-of-hearing" and are often not completely trusted if they have not accepted their hearing loss and because they can pass off as a hearing person.

e. Deaf students who grow up oral are seen as social outcasts unless they learn ASL and accept Deaf culture.

f. Name Signs--Deaf people are often identified by their name sign within communities.

C. Cultural Values and Beliefs of Deaf People

1. Language, as in any culture, is the foundation of Deaf culture. Deaf people strongly advocate the use of ASL and encourage its use in deaf education.

2. Speaking, or speech, is discouraged when communicating with Deaf people in sign language. It is acceptable only if you are speaking with non-Deaf people. Deaf people believe mouth movement while signing is to show expression, not utter words.

3. Social relations are strong in the Deaf community. They tend to gather with Deaf friends at Deaf clubs, tournaments, and conventions due to the barrier-free communication environment.

4. Folk Stories and Beliefs

   a. Abbe' de l'Eppe, founder of the first school for the deaf in France, is said to be the "father of sign language." He actually learned the language through deaf peasants.

   b. Laurent Clerc, father of Deaf education in America, is believed to have brought sign language to America with Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet. Actually, sign language already existed, especially in Martha's Vineyard.

   c. Origin of signs. For instance, the signs for "boy" and "girl" were intended to indicate a baseball cap and a bonnet. However, they were actually the signs for "le" and "la" in French.

INTRODUCTION TO DIVERSIFIED CULTURE

5. Literature, Plays and Poems

    a. Gil Eastman's *Sign Me Alice*
    b. National Theater of the Deaf productions - *My Third Eye*
    c. Dot Miles - *Gestures: Poetry in Sign Language*

6. Eyes and hands are referred to as deaf people's most valuable possessions. Nothing is more important to them than the ability to communicate.

7. Deaf people prize residential schools, for that is where they are exposed to Deaf culture, learn ASL, and find their Deaf identity. Thus, they fight to keep the schools open.

D. How to Communicate with Deaf People; Do's and Don'ts

1. Direct eye contact is important in Deaf culture. If a person talking with a Deaf person looks the other way, it means he/she is not paying attention or ignoring the Deaf person intentionally.

2. Attention-getting

    a. Tapping a Deaf person's shoulder
    b. Waving your hands
    c. Stamping on the floor or pounding on a table
    d. Flashing the room lights, usually in a group situation, to get everyone's attention.

3. Greeting--it is considered appropriate to greet a person and chat for awhile, even if you are in a hurry.

4. Ritual of introduction--Deaf people always introduce others by their full name and tell where they are from and which school they attended. The reason for this is Deaf people often form friendships by talking about a friend they have in common. The Deaf world is small and it is not surprising to meet someone who knows a friend of yours.

5. Code-switching: Deaf people talk to each other in ASL. However, if they meet a hearing person, they will usually switch to a manual English form of communication. It is always important to mention that a person is hearing during the ritual of introduction, so that they can code-switch. The reasons Deaf people do this are to include hearing people in the conversation, as well as keep their language unique and used by Deaf people only.

INTRODUCTION TO DIVERSIFIED CULTURE

6. Joking with Deaf people is done in a different manner. Facial expressions and exaggerated signs indicate that the Deaf person is joking. If a Deaf person does not do this, he/she is taken seriously.

7. Intermarriages among Deaf people are very common; 85-95 percent do so.

8. Ritual of farewell--Deaf people often look at their watch and say, "I have got to go soon" but actually leave an hour and a half later. Why? This is a cultural habit. Previously, the telephone was not used as a means of communication between Deaf people, so they had to take advantage of news in person. This behavior was passed on. Another reason is Deaf people prefer personal communication rather than talking on the TT/TTY, where it is hard to tell one's emotions.

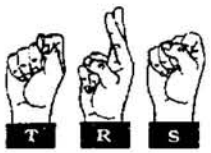
9. Open/honest/straightforward talk--Deaf people are very blunt with each other. If one Deaf person thinks that another is portly, he will say so. Deaf people find no need to use politically correct terms or make indirect statements because they lose meaning.

E. Differences Between Hearing and Deaf Culture

1. Deaf people see, think and reason through vision. ASL is a visual language. Therefore, thinking in sounds is nonexistent among Deaf people.

2. Hearing people see, think and reason through sound. English is a language of sound. Therefore, thinking is auditory rather than visual.

3. Since two very different senses are used between the two groups to think and reason, cultural differences often surface.



DEAF HERITAGE

I. History in Europe

A. **Aristotle concluded that the deaf were incapable of reason, due to their inability to hear.** People believed Aristotle and that is why the majority excluded Deaf people. This belief was generally accepted up to the Middle Ages.

B. A handful of deaf people, mainly children of wealthy noblemen, were educated before the 1750's.

C. Charles Michel Abbe' l'Eppe founded the first permanent school for the deaf to employ sign language in Paris in 1755.

1. Abbe l'Eppe was concerned about deaf people's salvation and believed that teaching them language and educating them would save their souls.

2. When l'Eppe died in 1789, Abbe' Roch-Ambroise Cucurron Sicard headed the National Institution for Deaf-Mutes, aided by his two famous pupils, Jean Massieu and Laurent Clerc.

D. Samuel Heinicke founded the first public school for the deaf to embrace the oral philosophy in 1778 in Leipzig, Germany.

E. The Braidwood Academy, founded in Edinburgh, Scotland, became world famous and served as a model for many schools in Europe.

II. History in North America

A. History of the American School for the Deaf

1. Mason Cogswell, who had a deaf daughter named Alice, and William Bollings, who had two deaf children, wanted to establish a school for the deaf in America so that their children would not have to reside in Britain at the Braidwood Academy

2. John Braidwood, who left Scotland because of money problems, moved to America and attempted to open a school between 1812 and 1817, but failed.

3. Mason Cogswell's daughter, Alice, was playing alone when Rev. Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet noticed her and attempted to communicate.

DEAF HERITAGE

4. Mason Cogswell agreed to fund Gallaudet's journey to England in 1815 to learn the teaching methods of the Braidwoods. However, the Braidwoods refused to teach him in order to protect the secret of their methods.

5. Gallaudet then went to the National Institution for Deaf Mutes in Paris, where he met Abbe' Sicard and Laurent Clerc.

6. Gallaudet convinced Clerc to come with him to America and establish a permanent school. They spent the entire journey home teaching written English to Clerc and French Sign language to Gallaudet.

7. Clerc became the first Deaf teacher at the Connecticut Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb in 1817, which was later named American School for the Deaf. Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet became the first superintendent.

8. Clerc and Gallaudet later married two of their students, Eliza Bordman and Sarah Fowler.

9. By 1843, six residential schools for the deaf were added in New York (1818), Pennsylvania (1820), Kentucky (1823), Ohio (1827), Virginia (1838) and Indiana (1843).

10. This time of the century was a peak for Deaf persons involved in deaf education because about half of the teachers of the deaf were Deaf themselves.

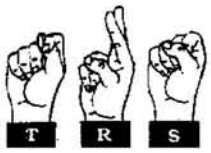
III. Alexander Graham Bell's View on Deafness

A. Bell's father and grandfather were *elocutionists* (teachers of oral speech and delivery). His mother, Eliza, was deaf, but did not speechread well, so Bell often had to interpret for her through finger spelling.

B. Bell's interest in deafness developed as he toured with his father, giving demonstrations on Visible Speech, a system developed by his grandfather used to describe spoken sounds through written symbols.

C. Bell began teaching Visible Speech in 1870 to about 30 pupils at a school for the deaf in Boston. Since they had a lot of residual hearing, he succeeded at improving their articulation.

D. In 1872, Bell began learning sign language and teaching speech at the American school at Hartford. He left in 1873 to do private tutoring.



DEAF HERITAGE

E. That same year, in 1873, Bell met his wife-to-be, Mabel Hubbard, when he was hired to teach her speech. Ironically, her father shared Bell's interest in telegraphy and agreed to help him financially in his attempt to improve upon telegraphy.

F. Bell introduced his invention of the telephone at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1876. He later used the money he earned to open and support oral schools and associations.

G. In 1877-1878, Bell went to England to establish an oral day school. He founded another oral day school in Washington D.C. five years later.

H. Bell believed that day schools were better suited for deaf children because they allow interaction with hearing society on a daily basis.

I. In Bell's *Memoir upon the Formation of a Deaf Variety of the Human Race*, he expressed concerns about deaf intermarriages. He believed they should be forbidden to prevent the production of deaf children, despite the fact that very few intermarriages produce deaf children.

J. Bell founded the Volta Bureau with $100,000 in 1886. It is an organization supporting research on deafness.

K. In 1890, Bell founded the American Association for the Promotion of the Teaching of Speech to the Deaf (AAPTSD). In 1956, it was renamed the Alexander Graham Bell Association.

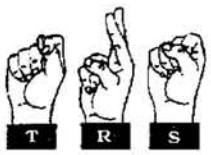
L. Bell opposed the use of sign language because he believed it would impede development of speech. He was committed to eliminating sign language.

M. Bell emphasized education for the good of society, trying to integrate deaf people into society as much as possible, so that they could make contributions.

IV. Edward Miner Gallaudet's View on Deafness

A. Edward Miner Gallaudet, born in 1837 to Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet & Sarah Fowler Gallaudet, followed in his father's footsteps in deaf education.

B. Edward's mother, Sarah Fowler Gallaudet, had no usable hearing and unintelligible speech. Young Edward learned sign language in order to communicate with her.



DEAF HERITAGE

C. In 1851, Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet died, leaving Edward to work at the Hartford school part-time when he was 14 and attend Trinity College part-time.

D. In 1857, Amos Kendall--another wealthy man who had supported Samuel Morse in expanding communication in telegraphy--approached Gallaudet with an offer to head the Columbia Institution for the Instruction of Deaf and Dumb and the Blind in Washington, D.C.

E. Gallaudet proved himself an excellent lobbyist, visiting Congress yearly to expand the school's federally funded budget.

F. In 1867, Gallaudet took a tour of Europe to visit schools for the deaf. He concluded that deaf children should be educated earlier, years of instruction should be increased, personnel increased, and speech and speech reading taught to those who can learn it. This was the beginning of the shift from manual to combined education.

G. Edward Gallaudet believed that each child should at least have the opportunity to develop oral skills after learning manual communication.

H. Gallaudet strongly believed that sign language was the *natural* language of deaf people and they should not be deprived of their right to its use.

I. Gallaudet, unlike Bell, believed in emphasizing the individual in education. He believed every person is different and should be treated accordingly.

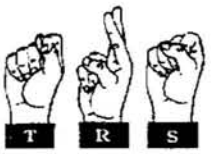
V. The Oral/Combined Debate Escalates

A. Gallaudet and Bell had a mutual admiration for the other. Bell was offered a professorship at the college in 1867, but he declined to focus his efforts on inventing the telephone.

B. Bell received his first honorary Ph.D. from Gallaudet in 1880.

C. During the summer of 1880, hearing educators of the deaf from all over the world met in Milan, Italy, to make a controversial resolution.

1. There were 164 participants at the second International Convention: 87 Italians, 56 Frenchman, 8 Englishmen, 5 Americans, and 8 others.



DEAF HERITAGE

2. All the participants (except the Americans) voted in favor of oralism as the best way to educate deaf children. The decision in favor of oralism over sign language redesigned Deaf education for the next 80 years, causing numerous teaching methodologies to arise for Deaf children that resulted in a few bilinguists among Deaf persons.

3. European manual schools took a step backward when they banned sign language and changed to the oral method.

4. Ironically, the 5 Americans represented 51 schools with over 6,000 pupils, even more than the number of students represented by the other 159 members of the convention.

5. American schools for the deaf still used sign language, but oralism took the helm in education of the deaf and continued doing so until the 1960's.

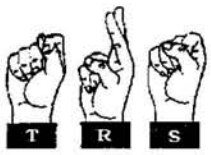
D. 1886 - the Conference of American Instructors of the Deaf passed a resolution for all schools for the deaf to teach speech. Both oralists and combinists agreed that the number of students receiving speech instruction actually *dropped* that year. Bell blamed it on deaf teachers and asked Gallaudet to stop hiring them.

E. In 1890 Gallaudet tried to establish a school to teach instructors how to educate deaf people. Bell opposed the move because he was against the idea of hiring deaf teachers. He testified against it before Congress, even though Gallaudet verbally promised him not to hire deaf teachers. Bell believed Gallaudet would hire deaf teachers anyway. The Senate originally approved Gallaudet's proposal, then reduced the money involved. At Bell's urging, they refused to continue funding of the school for instructors. Gallaudet fought back and passed an amendment for a normal school, and it remains to this day one of the most respected schools of deaf education.

F. Bell and Gallaudet's resentment of each other grew to a climax in 1895 at the meeting of a possible merger of the CAID and the AAPTSD. Gallaudet denounced Bell's efforts to prevent the establishment of the Normal College. That incident marked a rift between the Combinists and Oralists that continues to this day.

VI. Alexander Graham Bell's Legacy

A. *Alexander Graham Bell Association*--the AGB Association still promotes the use of residual hearing and speech to integrate deaf people with the world around them.



DEAF HERITAGE

B. *Volta Bureau*--is located in Washington and performs research on deafness, including how to eliminate it.

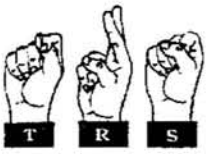
C. *The Volta Review* is the major publication of AGB.

V. Edward Miner Gallaudet's Legacy

A. Convention of American Instructors of the Deaf continued serving as an association of teachers dedicated to improving the education of deaf children in America.

B. *American Annals of the Deaf* served to communicate the views of Deaf America.

C. Gallaudet University is the only liberal arts university for the deaf in the world. Approximately 2,500 deaf and hard-of-hearing students attend Gallaudet.



The Deaf Community
(Part 1)

I. Introduction to the Deaf Community

A. The Deaf Community represents a wide range of people associated with deafness in various roles. The core of the Deaf community represents cultural values, political and social identity. It has over 150 years of a rich social life and folklore. Through efforts to meet their needs, deaf people have organized statewide, nationwide and international networks of social, religious, athletic, scholarly, political and literary organizations serving local, national and international memberships.

B. There are four avenues or ways to gain acceptance into the Deaf community - *see Attachment 4.1*

1. *Political*--ability to exert influence on matters that directly affect the Deaf community. Example: "Deaf President Now" rally at Gallaudet.

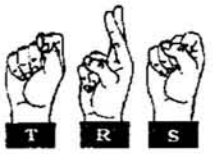
2. *Audiological*--refers to actual hearing loss. Obviously not available to hearing people.

3. *Linguistic*--ability to understand and use ASL. Level of fluency related to level of acceptance into Deaf community.

4. *Social*--participation in social functions with other members of the Deaf community.

C. A person's attitude toward deafness is the most important criteria for being accepted. Everything is weighed in relation to a person's attitude toward deafness.

1. Hearing people generally are accepted on Linguistic and Social levels.
2. It is possible for a person who is deaf or hard-of-hearing not to be a member of the Deaf community.



The Deaf Community
(Part 1)

II. Establishment of the National Association of the Deaf

A. In the mid-1800's, Deaf people wanted to have a voice in what was happening to them. They were concerned about education of the deaf, industrial training of the deaf and, discrimination and lack of understanding about deafness.

B. The first national convention took place in Cincinnati, Ohio, in August of 1880, a few months prior to the banning of sign language at the Milan Convention. Three deaf men, Robert McGregor (its first president), Edmund Booth and Edwin Hodgson, founded the NAD.

C. The NAD worked to improve the image of Deaf people. They discouraged peddling and took action when state governments tried to ban deaf people from driving.

D. Today, there are 51 affiliated State Associations, including the District of Columbia, that work with the NAD for the rights of Deaf people and try to further improve their lives.

III. Deaf People's Contributions to Society, but not limited to:

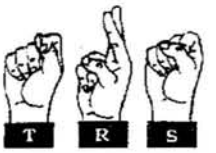
A. Communication

1. Samuel Morse, inventor of the Morse code for telegraphy, had a deaf wife. He invented the Morse code in order to communicate with her.

2. Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone thinking he was creating a device that would allow him to communicate with his deaf wife, Mabel. Ironically, it isolated Deaf people even further until the invention of the TT/TTY and relay services.

B. Sports

1. Gallaudet quarterback, Paul Hubbard, invented the football huddle in1892. He had to use the huddle because the other deaf football team could see everything they were signing. The huddle caught on with other teams.



The Deaf Community
(Part 1)

2. Umpires first used signals to aid William "Dummy" Hoy, a deaf baseball outfielder for the Washington Senators and the Cincinnati Reds. The umpires started raising their arms to indicate a strike and that practice has been used ever since.

IV. Establishment of Mainstreamed Schools

A. The Passing of Public Law 94-142

1. In 1975, Congress passed P.L. 94-142, which stirred controversy in the Deaf community.

2. It was originally intended to provide access for handicapped children to the "least restrictive environment," and targeted disabilities like blindness.

3. Some people took advantage of this law to place the residential schools as the last option and place the deaf children in mainstreamed schools as the first option.

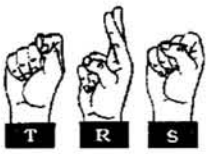
4. This law was a reverse discrimination against Deaf teachers from teaching in the mainstreamed public schools. Instead of hiring interpreters to voice for the Deaf teachers, public school systems hired "qualified" or "signed" interpreters without RID or state certifications to interpret.

5. P.L. 94-142 was renamed I.D.E.A., which stands for Individualized Development Education Act.

B. I.D.E.A. From a Hearing Parent's Viewpoint

1. The idea of mainstreaming appeals largely to hearing parents of deaf children because they usually have negative presumptions about residential schools. The idea of deaf children coming home from school is very pleasing.

2. Parents are led to believe the same thing the oralists taught--that deaf children will be easily integrated into society if they are mainstreamed, but with a sign language interpreter.



The Deaf Community
(Part 1)

C. From a Deaf Person's Point-of-View

1. I.D.E.A. has been taken advantage of to "save money," that is, close down residential schools paid for by state taxpayers. However, it is much more costly.

2. In a small town where there would be only 2 or 3 deaf pupils, the school would have to provide services like teacher training, sign language classes for interpreters, interpreter training expenses and salaries, speech teachers, a special psychologist for Individual Education Plans (as specified by I.D.E.A.), and so on.

3. The quality of the people hired may not be very high, since more professionals are needed, and there may be a shortage.

4. Some students may thrive in a mainstreamed environment, but like children who grew up oral, a lot of them grew up isolated.

5. Residential schools, with little budgets, would have centrally located resources with the best teachers, speech teachers, etc. if they had more financial support.

6. Deaf students at residential schools are accepted as equal, not looked down upon. They are able to learn their native sign language and Deaf culture.

V. American Athletic Association of the Deaf, Deaf Olympics

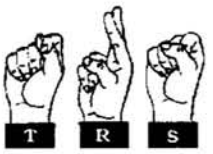
A. American Athletic Association of the Deaf

1. World Games for the Deaf was first held in Paris in 1924.

2. American participation began in 1935 with two Deaf athletes representing the United States.

3. In 1949, the first Winter Games for the Deaf were held in Austria.

4. The World Games came to America for the first time in Washington, D.C. in 1965.



The Deaf Community
(Part 1)

5. The most recent World Games were held in Sofia, Bulgaria, during the summer of 1993.

VI. National Theater of the Deaf

A. The National Theater of the Deaf was established in 1967 after being ridiculed and rejected several times.

B. The NTD became the first theater company to tour all 50 states and has appeared in most foreign countries.

C. It inspired other countries such as England, Australia, France, Canada, and Sweden to establish their own theaters of the deaf.

D. The NTD has many actors and actresses famous in the Deaf community:

1. Bernard Bragg, who played in "The Quiet Man" and "And Your Name is Jonah."

2. Ed Waterstreet was the Deaf father in "Love is Never Silent."

3. Phyllis Frelich was the Deaf mother in "Love is Never Silent," and appeared in the Broadway play "Children of a Lesser God."

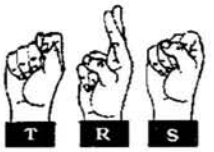
4. Linda Bove taught sign language on "Sesame Street" and appeared in the movie, "Children of a Lesser God."

5. Many other actors and actresses have pursued acting careers after performing with the NTD.

VII. Assistive Devices for the Deaf

A. *Hearing aids*--Most people don't realize that a hearing aid does not necessarily correct the hearing. A hearing aid can distort background sounds that drown out what the person is trying to hear.

1. *Audio tape*--we will listen to a tape that will give you an idea of what the person wearing a hearing aid actually hears. (play tape)



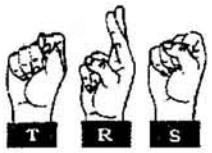
The Deaf Community
(Part 1)

2. Discuss: How did you feel? Were you surprised? How many of you know someone that wears a hearing aid? Do you feel frustrated when they don't hear you?

B. Technology for Deaf people began only 30 years ago.

1. 1960s was the era of interpreters.
2. 1970s was the era of TT/TTYs.
3. 1980s was the era of closed captioning.
4. 1990s is the era of relay services.

C. Hearing ear dog
D. Flasher system
E. Closed-captioned television
F. Vibrating pagers
G. Vibrating alarms



The Deaf Community
(Part 2)

I. Use of Sign Language Interpreters

A. Rules for using an interpreter. *See Attachment 5.1*

B. Discussion on interpreters. *See Attachment 5.2*

C. *Certification of interpreters*--some states, but not all, classify interpreters by categories of expertise. Interpreters are tested on their expressive and receptive skills using the Quality Assurance Screening Test (QAST), Register of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), National Association of the Deaf (NAD), or other state certification tests. Interpreters that are extremely skilled are classified in the higher levels, while those who just got their certification usually start at lower levels and work their way up as their skills improve.

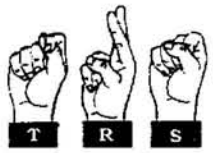
II. Different Communication Systems Used in the Deaf Community

A. *ASL (American Sign Language)* is a visual language with its own syntax, vocabulary and grammar. The signs of this language are based on hand shape, position, expression, movement and orientation of the hands in relation to each other and the body.

B. *MCE (Manually Coded English)* are signing systems like Signed Exact English (SEE) made for hearing instructors who found it easier to sign according to their spoken language rather than learn ASL. MCE follows English word order but is NOT a language; it is a teaching aid used in class instruction.

C. *PSE (Pidgin Signed English)* is a hybrid version of ASL and MCE. Deaf people often use PSE to communicate with hearing signers, since most hearing people are taught MCE or PSE rather than ASL. The reason for this is hearing people find it hard to learn ASL, and they find learning PSE easier because it still has English syntax rather than ASL syntax.

D. *Cued Speech* is a system of eight hand symbols that go with particular sounds near the mouth. For example, in lipreading, it is difficult to tell the difference between "bat," "mat," and "pat." With cued speech, a deaf student could learn to lipread by watching cues to understand what is being said. However, cued speech is not a language of its own either; like MCE, it is merely a teaching aid.



The Deaf Community
(Part 2)

E. *Finger spelling* is a system in which hand shapes and hand positions combine to form individual letters of the alphabet by which one can literally spell out words. As one develops skills, this can be read almost as fast as speech.

F. *Oral communication* uses speech and speechreading.

G. *Simultaneous communication* uses speech at the same time as signs and finger spelling.

H. Speechreading

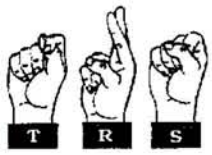
1. Speechreading is achieved through the recognition of spoken words via lipreading, facial expressions and gestures. Only 30% of the sounds can be recognized from lip shape. Therefore, context clues and the use of residual hearing are essential for success at speechreading.

2. When speaking to someone who is deaf, speak normally. Your lips automatically form the words. If you try to emphasize movement of your lips, your lips don't form naturally and it makes it more difficult to read.

I. *Total Communication* includes the full spectrum: gestures, speech, formal signs, finger spelling, reading and writing.

III. Why don't some deaf people have much exposure to English?

A. Most children grow up and "pick up" sounds around them. They are able to identify different sounds when parents speak to them and they pick up language very rapidly in early childhood. Deaf infants are deprived of this opportunity to pick up auditory information from their environment and therefore learn language later, missing the most critical part of their life for language development.



The Deaf Community
(Part 2)

B. Deaf children, when taught language at an early age, grow up using sign language as a native language; they learn English very well as a second language because they already know ASL as their first language. This could be compared to a child that learns Spanish as his first language, but later learns English when he enters elementary school. Unfortunately for deaf children, some hearing parents avoid teaching their children sign language and try to force them to speak English when they cannot even hear the language they are trying to learn.

C. Most children who grow up without language until a later age will never quite master English. This happens to some Deaf people who grow up uneducated because their parents are uninformed about education options for their Deaf children.

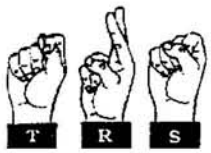
D. Many Deaf people are ASL-dominant bilinguals. They speak ASL fluently, but have not mastered English. Every now and then, they may say something in ASL syntax using English words that may not make sense to an English monolingual.

E. Many schools for the Deaf are using a bilingual/bicultural approach. This is a recent phenomenon. They use ASL to communicate among Deaf people, but teach English, the major language, to Deaf children. However, low expectations have hampered progress. Also, language cannot be learned in the classroom unless one already knows a language.

F. English is one of the most difficult languages in the world to learn. Its grammatical structure is rigid and some rules do not make sense to Deaf people. Several examples: the past tense of walk is walked; why not "goed" for go? If the plural of mouse is mice, why not "hice" for houses? Or if you say geese for plural of goose, why not "meese" for the plural of moose?

IV. Deaf President Now

Show "Deaf Mosaic" videotape of Deaf President Now



The Deaf Community
(Part 2)

V. Changes in Attitude Towards the Deaf Community

A. The Role of Deaf People in Education

1. Even though Gallaudet has a Deaf president, many administrators at various colleges for Deaf people across the country are not Deaf and may lack the necessary understanding of Deaf culture to teach their students effectively.

2. In 1880, the end of the Golden Age of the Deaf, 40 percent of teachers of the Deaf were Deaf themselves; right after the Milan Convention, this figure dropped to 31%. In 1927, during the heyday of oralism, only 14% of the teachers were Deaf. Sadly, this figure is about the same today.

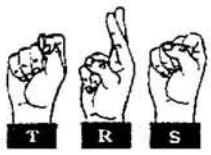
3. More and more Deaf students are learning how to use a sign system that may be Exact English or Pidgin (combo of SEE and ASL). ASL cannot be used with spoken English at the same time; therefore, Deaf students who do so have to use Pidgin Signed English or Signed Exact English, which is not a true language.

4. Evidence of bilingualism as an effective method of educating Deaf children has not been fully accepted. According to some studies, Deaf children with Deaf parents who grow up using ASL do better than Deaf children with hearing parents who force them to learn English first.

B. Deaf People in the Entertainment Industry

1. Not many Deaf people were portrayed in Hollywood; this seemed to have changed with the appearance of Marlee Matlin, who won an Oscar for her performance in "Children of a Lesser God."

2. The National Theater of the Deaf wrote many plays expressing the views of the Deaf community to the public. One of the most popular plays was *My Third Eye*, in which oralism was condemned and sign language was emphasized. Various Deaf actors and actresses told tales of how they were treated in oral schools, such as having one's hands struck with a stick when he tried to sign; another was told not to laugh because he uttered



The Deaf Community
(Part 2)

animalistic noises, and he laughed silently thereafter. It was a powerful agent of change, along with the recognition of ASL as a language, and the Deaf community grew stronger during the 1970's.

C. Feelings of Pride Instead of Oppression

1. One key to the upsurge of Deaf pride is the discovery by William Stokoe that ASL is a language with similar linguistic rules as other languages. Interest in Deaf heritage and culture increased.

2. The number of Deaf people in higher education increased, producing more educated and capable Deaf adults.

3. Especially after Dr. King Jordan became president of Gallaudet University, Deaf people raised their expectations and kept their hopes high for a better future.

VI. Recent Changes in the Deaf Community

A. Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)

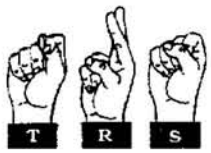
1. The ADA prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in employment, public accommodations and services provided by corporations, public services and telecommunications.

2. It is not an affirmative action statute, but it requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations, as long as there is no undue hardship on the employer and the business.

3. In the private sector, the ADA is the first piece of legislation that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in companies with more than 15 employees.

4. In the public sector, the ADA prohibits discrimination in public transportation that includes buses and rail and provides for all new vehicles to be accessible to individuals with disabilities, including those who use wheelchairs.

5. Title III of the ADA prohibits discrimination in hotels, restaurants, movie theaters, stadiums, convention centers and other public areas.



The Deaf Community
(Part 2)

6. Title IV of the ADA focuses on telecommunications accessibility. It states that an intra- and inter-state relay service shall be established to enable those with hearing and speech impairments to use voice communication by wire or radio. This is intended to increase the equality and enjoyment of life for those with speech or hearing impairments.

B. Equal Access

1. After ADA and the DPN movement, Deaf people became more active and visible among groups and organizations with decision-making power that impacted education and the social welfare of Deaf people and their community.

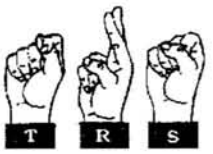
2. Unfortunately, some of their efforts were viewed negatively because the public did not understand their true intentions. Deaf people want equality and the power to make decisions on issues that affect them and their community.

C. Cochlear-Implant Controversy

1. Recently, the cochlear implant has given some Deaf people the ability to hear sounds much better; however, it does not work for everyone and the sounds may be as distorted as if heard with a hearing aid.

2. Many Deaf people see it as a cultural issue since the cochlear implant has replaced the oralist movement as an effective alternative to "integrate" Deaf children into society. Deaf people are concerned that parents may be mislead into believing that giving their deaf children cochlear implants will help them become hearing. This is not the case and it reinforces the denial of accepting their children as deaf. Also, there is no research to verify that no harm is done to the child or what the effects of the implant will be on their adult life. People with cochlear implants cannot hear fully what hearing people can hear, so the Deaf community see them as "pale imitations of hearing people."

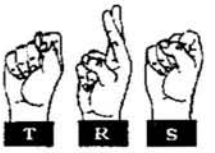
3. On the other hand, cochlear implants have proven to be effective with some patients, depending on the cause of the hearing loss. They may be able to hear sounds more clearly.



The Deaf Community
(Part 2)

D. Bilingual/bicultural education has become common. Simultaneous communication is used by 80 percent of Deaf children, and they learn ASL among other Deaf people. Deaf children in residential schools are encouraged to find their Deaf identity, but not to isolate themselves from the "outside world." They are encouraged to learn English and learn how to speak, though sign language takes precedence in education of the Deaf.

E. Relay Services provide deaf people with the ability to reach out and communicate with hearing peers. Previously, it was necessary for both parties to have TT/TTYs or use interpreters to communicate, but relay services broke down the barriers of communication over the telephone.



AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE
(Part 1)

I. What is ASL?

A. ASL is a visual language. It is also considered a visual-gesture language. *See Attachment 6.1*

B. Gestures can be simply defined as any movements of the body that occur for the purpose of communication. In the past, people thought that the body movements of ASL were imprecise and irregular. Now we know that gestures found in ASL are a special set of rule-governed behaviors called signs.' The units of ASL are composed of specific movements.

1. The hearing community also use gestures (that are not ASL but are part of the visual components important to ASL). What does it mean to you when someone shrugs their shoulders? Usually it means "I don't know." If you weren't looking at them would you have gotten that message?

2. Hearing people use many signs. Ask agents to think of signs they may use. Give examples to get them started: sleep, hair, OK, eat, boat, time, cry, house, walk, bye, comb, baby.

C. What is meant by visual? Since ASL uses body movements instead of sound, listeners/receivers use their eyes instead of their ears to understand what is being said. Because all linguistic information must be received through the eyes, the language is carefully structured to fit the needs and capabilities of the eyes.

1. Example: a hearing person absorbs a lot of information through listening. In a meeting where several people are talking and interrupting each other, a hearing person can follow the conversation.

2. Someone who is deaf receives information visually and needs to look at the person signing. It is much more difficult to follow the conversation and the speakers.